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FEATURE STORY

The BRASS BUTTON

by Jack Bechdolt

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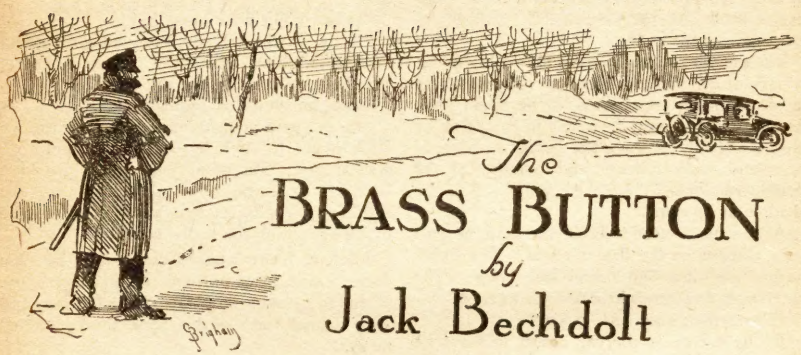
Some Advance Information

IF our readers are pleased with this number of "Mystery Magazine" they are going to like the next issue much better as it is going to contain a collection of material such as was never before sold for ten cents. The feature story is remarkable. It was the work of Charles Fulton Oursler, and is by all odds the best mystery story he has ever written. We want you to read "The Whispering Mummy." It is uncanny. Every line will rivet your interest. The detective work is marvelous, and there is a pleasing plot running through the story that will make a lasting impression on your mind. This time the short stories compare very favorably with the feature story. For example Frederic W. Johnston contributes a plot that will amaze you in "The Man With the Crutch." It is one of those yarns you have to finish before you lay down the magazine. "Beware of Clues," written by Harry J. Samuels, contains an unexpected surprise finish that makes his story end much different from what you expect. We have another gripping script from Merritt L. Allen entitled "The Chief's Big Bluff." Just watch for that particular story and see if it isn't a "dandy." Then there's Albert Chenicek's story about a thief who slipped up. It is called "The Crook's Last Shot." The title only suggests one incident in this exciting tale of an underworld character. The rest will make you hold your breath with suspense. The second installment of Laura Reid Montgomery's story "The Room Without Windows" ends in the next number and a new serial by a popular author will be announced. In keeping with our desire to please our readers, we are omitting the news events which we have been publishing in the back of this magazine and are now giving you more stories and interesting articles instead. We think you will like this idea much better.

The winners of the prizes in our last contest have reason to remember with pleasure that they were paid promptly. It was a fair and square contest. Since then we have received a number of requests from our readers to start a new contest. We may do so very soon as the plan seems to be popular and we wish to hold the interest of our subscribers. Later on we hope to announce the terms of a new contest. In the meantime do not fail to tell all your friends that we would be glad to number them among the regular readers of this publication.

THE EDITOR.



The BRASS BUTTON

by

Jack Bechdolt

CHAPTER ONE

TRACKS IN THE SNOW

PATROLMAN RALPH MADIGAN did not need to look at a calendar to know the month. January in New York has a cold all its own, and this was a typical January night, cold, with a touch of rawness and several inches of snow on the ground. More snow was falling and transforming the trees of Central Park into lacework patterns of beautifully intricate design, etched sharply against night's blackness.

Patrolman Madigan did not need a calendar to know the day, for Tuesday was his day off, and Tuesday was dawning.

Nor did he need a watch to know the hour. Midnight released a great flood of pleasure vehicles accumulated in the theatre district during the evening. The amusement reservoir had emptied this accumulation, and all the boulevards had run bank-full for an hour with limousines and sedans and an occasional touring car, in which nestled well-wrapped people.

The roads were empty now. That meant it was past one o'clock of a snowy January morning, a Tuesday morning in January, to be exact.

Patrolman Madigan was afoot, and he followed a path that winds among the rocks and shrubbery above the east side of the park's largest lake down to a bridge that crosses to the west shore.

He was a husky, hulking, healthy Irish lad, was Madigan, and his big feet encased in broad-toed police shoes printed the story of his slow, steady progress across the park in black tracks on the white page of virgin snowfall.

It was an hour when the park was devoid of all life, or should have been. Midnight is the deadline there for visitors, and the patrolman was as lonely as if he walked in the middle of the Sahara.

The collar of his reefer was turned high, and the visor of his uniform cap pulled low, so that all of him that showed was a button of nose, stung by the cold wind to a glowing red, his red cheeks, the glint of shadowed blue eyes, and the red-glowing end of a cigar that had been given him earlier in the night by a kind-hearted person in a touring car. It was past midnight, a bad night at that, and if Madigan violated any departmental rule by taking comfort from his cigar he deserves forgiveness.

Madigan was halfway across the bridge, which was an arched structure of Japanese pattern with high bulwark.

On the boulevard of the west shore of the lake he saw a limousine automobile stopped. No lights were burning on the car. At the moment it came to his attention a human figure, a black silhouette against the snow, was moving near the car.

The patrolman might have blown his police whistle as a signal to the car to stay just where it was until he investigated, or he might have fired a warning shot from his pistol. But he chose, instead, to leave the bridge at a rapid pace and walk quickly and quietly up the boulevard toward the car, keeping well in the shadow as he came.

As he neared the vehicle the man he had seen climbed to the driver's seat. The lights flashed on, headlights and tail lamp. The patrolman was now close enough to shout

"Here, you; hold on! Stop!"

If the driver of the car meant to leave he changed his mind at this peremptory hail. He poked out his head and, seeing that the law commanded, waited Madigan's approach.

"What's the idea, turning off your lights?" Madigan asked sharply as he came abreast the car and noted its license number for future reference.

"Didn't turn 'em off," the chauffeur answered. "They went out, officer, and I had to get out and trace the wiring back to the battery before I found what was wrong. A connection came loose. It's all O. K. now."

"And whose automobile would this be?"

"Mr. Justin Ames's car."

"I'll just speak to him."

"No use. He's not with me. Look for yourself."

The limousine was unoccupied.

"Why might you be out so late?" Madigan asked suspiciously.

The chauffeur—he was wrapped in a big fur coat with a collar turned high about his face—chuckled. He unbuttoned the coat and, rummaging in his pocket, produced a couple of cigars, which he proffered to Madigan, who backed away from them like a suspicious bulldog.

"It's just this way, officer," the chauffeur explained; "the boss don't know I borrowed his car this last hour. I'd rather he didn't. I took him home from a show, and then I drove down to see a young lady friend of mine home from a dance over on Eighteenth street. It was sort of taking a liberty, you might say, and Mr. Ames might not like it if he found out."

"What might your name be?"

"Kelly, Michael Kelly, but you ain't going to say anything to Ames? Have a heart! Would you be losing me my job?"

Madigan chuckled indulgently.

"Be off with you, Michael Kelly. Sure, we Irish ought to stick by each other, and so I always say. But mind your lights are kept burning, or some other patrolman will be handing you a ticket to a show you'll not be liking—meaning the traffic court!"

Michael Kelly laughed and swung into his driver's seat, after pressing the gift cigars into Madigan's hand. He started the big car, and with a final wave of his hand the car rolled away.

Madigan sniffed the cigars with the nose of a connoisseur, and tucked them into an inner pocket of his coat. As he did so, standing there in the empty road, his eyes roved about, as is the practise of patrolmen on lonely night rounds, and he saw something that caused his breath to explode in a startled puff.

Leading from the boulevard over the bank that led to the lake was a necklace of black links, the footprints of a man in the snow. One set of tracks went to the lake, the other returned from the lake to where the car had stood. In the light snow they were perfectly marked.

Madigan got out his pocket flashlight to aid the dim illumination from distant arcs and, keeping his own trail distinct from the marks in the snow, followed the footprints to the water's edge.

A thin ice had formed around the lake shore, and where the footprints came down to it this ice had been broken.

By the look of the break something bulky and heavy had been thrown into the lake.

Patrolman Madigan's busy flash lamp discovered near by on the unbroken ice, as if it had fallen there, a black object. The object lay a little distance from shore, and he had to fish for it with his night-stick to drag it back without breaking the ice and losing it.

When he had his prize ashore it proved to

be exactly what he thought it was, a man's felt hat—a black hat.

The patrolman examined the hat, and examined the break in the ice and the endless chain of footprints leading to the lake and back again to the boulevard.

"Humph!" he said suddenly and intensely. "Humph!"

He looked up the road, but without hope. The limousine had vanished.

Then he turned and hurried toward the nearest police telephone.

Before two hours more had passed the park police had grappling irons in the lake, and had brought out the body of a man, a man who had been killed by a violent blow over the head that fractured the skull.

The body evidently had not been in the water more than a couple of hours. The man had not been dead more than a day, or two days at the outside.

Patrolman Madigan's day off had begun in a manner totally unexpected. It promised to be one of the busiest days of his brief career on the force.

CHAPTER TWO

MR. JUSTIN AMES

IN appearance John Weaver of the metropolitan detective force was the ideal man for his job. He did not look like a detective.

John Weaver was a youngish man, soldierly in bearing, but otherwise average in all things: height, color, manner, dress, speech—all the outward characteristics.

One might see the man half a dozen times in a day and not remember him from time to time.

But mentally John Weaver was far from being an average man. That was why his chief assigned him at once to the Central Park murder mystery.

At about ten o'clock of the morning following the discovery of the body in the lake, Patrolman Madigan presented himself in John Weaver's private office. This was Ralph Madigan's first case of any importance. He should be pardoned a certain amount of enthusiasm on that score. After several years which have developed no greater excitement than warning householders to clean the snow off their walks, or standing on post near an election booth, a young patrolman like Madigan welcome the advent of a real murder case with a professional relish that is no reflection on his native kindness of heart or humanity.

Madigan came in briskly, his blue eyes sparkling.

He whisked out a notebook from his pocket and announced:

"I got his name all right, and all about him, lieutenant."

Weaver smiled encouragement. "Good work!"

"I followed up the address we found in the pocket. The man was Lafe Newton. Residence, third floor, rear, of No. 405 West Twentieth street, which is a kind of boarding-house or tenement like. Been missing from there since eight o'clock yesterday morning. Landlady identified him at once. Occupation: waiting on table in a Century lunchroom on Eighth avenue up to ten days ago. Went through all his stuff. No trace of kin. Just a few odd clothes, a union card for a Chicago local of the Waiters' union, one or two old postcards from men, a letter from some woman written about ten years ago—nothing in that—junk mostly. In fact, lieutenant, the man was just a kind of bum, you might say, a drifter that didn't seem to have any friends or family or ties; never made much money and never owed any bills or anything, and nothing in the world to show how he ever got mixed up with a rich young man like Mr. Justin Ames——"

"Providing he did get mixed up with Mr. Justin Ames," Weaver corrected.

"Yes, sir," Madigan agreed humbly. He handed to Weaver the few letters and articles of possible interest he had collected from the dead man's effects. Weaver added these to a small miscellany from the dead man's pockets that included a cheap penknife, a key ring, two dull lead-pencils, a broken cigar, and a dollar watch. He made a few notes on a slip of paper.

"Well, Madigan," Weaver smiled, "you say you're ambitious to work into the detective branch of the service? Suppose you give me

your summing up of this thing so far as it's gone. What do you make of it?"

Madigan grinned, and his pink face flushed red with pleasure and excitement. He took off his uniform cap to scratch his red poll as he wrinkled his brow and prepared to give a business-like summing up.

"Sure, sir, if it wasn't for Mr. Justin Ames's name getting into this, I'd say it wasn't no case for a man to tear his shirt. Just the killing of a fellow that nobody knows much about—a fellow without any kin or, seemingly, any friends. Nothing unusual at all, at all——"

"Madigan!" Weaver interrupted. "I'm afraid you have a taste for the sensational. A man has been killed. In the eyes of the law one man is as good as another, one life as sacred as another."

"Aw, sure!" Madigan agreed hastily, "but speaking from the point of interest, all I can see that makes this a big case is the name of Mr. Ames. His limousine car getting into it and all, and him a fine, rich young man that goes into swell society and owns such a fine house on Fifty-ninth street and all—well, that's the part that interests me!

"Well, sir, anyhow, here's a man named Lafe Newton, waiter, killed by a crack on the bean, put into a millionaire's auto and thrown into Central Park lake in the dead of a cold night. Object, evidently not robbery, because he had twenty-nine dollars left in his pockets when we fished him out. Cards and papers and so on not disturbed apparently. No signs of a struggle——"

Weaver, who had listened to this with a shadowy smile, interrupted here.

"Madigan, learn to use your eyes better. There is evidence of a struggle. Evidence that might be important. A button is missing from the dead man's coat."

"Sure, lieutenant, many an unmarried man has a button off his coat!"

"Learn to examine evidence more closely, Madigan. This missing button might be interesting. In the first place, the man's coat had brass buttons, a plain, old-style brass button. How many coats are fastened with brass buttons these days? How often do you see a brass button, except the embossed buttons on uniforms? Not once in ten years, do you?"

"I mind seeing some once on a foreigner just off Ellis Island," Madigan said slowly.

"Yes," Weaver agreed, "that's better! That's observation! Sometimes cheap foreign-made clothes have brass buttons. And this man's coat had brass buttons. The three buttons still on the coat have been sewed on very firmly with heavy, waxed black thread. The missing button has left behind a little tail of broken black threads, and if you examined the cloth about it closely, as I did, you would see that the strands of the weave have been stretched, even broken. Now, what would you say that meant?"

Madigan thought and said slowly:

"Well, it might be the button was torn off the coat?"

"My idea exactly!" Weaver nodded. "Torn off. And perhaps torn off in the struggle that ended in this man Newton's death. Madigan, if we could find that missing brass button we might find where that struggle took place, supposing Newton's slayer did not pick it up——"

Madigan broke into an exclamation.

"Holy saints in heaven! Find a brass button among six or seven million people in New York? Find a brass button some place on Manhattan Island? Sa-a-y, lieutenant——"

"As a matter of fact," Weaver said severely, "it's very likely to be in one of two or three places we already know about. One of them is that room you just searched. If I had been in your boots, and anxious to make a record in this case, I'd have looked for a brass button there."

Madigan made a bolt for the door.

Weaver asked: "Where are you going?"

"Button hunting, lieutenant."

Weaver shook his head. "Not now; Justin Ames and his chauffeur will be here in a few minutes—probably are waiting in the reception room now. I want you to see them and hear them. We'll hunt for buttons later."

The patrolman on duty in Weaver's outer office at that moment knocked on the door and announced Justin Ames. Weaver directed he be sent in, and Madigan retired to a chair in the corner.

Two men came into the office. The one whom Weaver greeted as Ames was possibly thirty years old, quietly dressed in rich material, a man of more than medium height,

blond, studious and thoughtful in appearance. Justin Ames looked considerably excited.

The other man, Ames's companion, was noticeably short, slight of build, inclined to bowlegs. He looked like a jockey grown too old for the track.

Ames met Weaver with a handclasp.

"Weaver, my dear fellow, I know this dead man; I saw him only day before yesterday! Most unusual thing! By thunder, Weaver, it's almost uncanny. Let me tell you——"

"Excuse me," Weaver interrupted, "but this other gentleman?"

"Beg your pardon," Ames said. "Michael Kelly, Detective John Weaver. Kelly drives my car for me."

Patrolman Madigan in his corner exploded a "Humph!" so loud they all looked at him. Weaver introduced Madigan to the strangers.

Ames settled down in a chair and leaned forward.

"That chap, that dead fellow, he called on me day before yesterday at my house!" he exclaimed. "Called at my house and demanded ten thousand dollars on account—ten thousand, mind! And he expected ninety thousand more before he was through with me! Now he's on a slab there in the morgue! Good Lord, what a mixup!"

"Wait! Wait a minute!" Weaver begged. "Let's get this straight—in proper order! Now, who is the man?"

"Hanged if I know. Said his name was Newton."

"You never saw him before?"

"Never saw or heard of him. My valet, Underwood, said a man wanted to see me. I had him sent in. He said his name was Newton."

"And what did he want?"

Justin Ames grinned ruefully.

"Seemed to want all my money!"

"Why? Did he give any reason?"

Ames flushed.

"He talked a lot of tosh. Incoherent, wild nonsense. Well, yes, a sort of reason, from his point of view, maybe. Weaver, you know my father made his fortune out of a patent preparation to manicure women's fingernails. I was never ashamed of it. Rather a good idea. This man Newton burst in on me with the claim that the idea for that stuff was his invention. Had the cheek to say my father stole it from him. Damned scoundrel!"

"Had he any proof of this?"

"He had some papers, an old formula for the manicure preparation, a couple of letters from my father making appointments to see him—nothing that proved anything at all! No acknowledgment of indebtedness. Nothing, except the formula which he might have guessed at—or stolen—and two letters making appointments to discuss a matter mentioned evidently in his letters to my father. You can't call that proof."

"And he wanted ten thousand dollars?"

"He wanted a hundred thousand! Ten thousand on the spot!"

"What did you say?"

"Told him to go to the devil, or rather to my lawyers; that's about the same thing. I said if he had any claim he would have to establish it in the courts. I didn't intend to give him a red cent. I told him to sue and be hanged!"

Justin Ames smiled a trifle grimly. Something of his mild, studious look was gone. One saw that he was a man of determination, one who would adopt a principle and stand by it—fight for it if necessary.

Weaver said: "Well? What did Newton say?"

"He said a lot. Most of it was pretty wild. The gist of his argument was that if I didn't hand him that ten thousand in twenty-four hours and meet his other demands I'd be sorry about it. He got so noisy and violent and worked up, I rang for Underwood, my valet, and told him to show the man the door. That was the last I saw of Newton until just now at the morgue. A funny mess!"

"Ames," Weaver said sharply, "did you threaten this man Newton?"

Ames hesitated.

"I might have raised my voice a little. I was angry at the beggar for a moment; who wouldn't be? Probably I did tell him to get out, and stay out, or he'd wish he had—something of that sort. But I didn't murder him, if that's what you mean."

"I didn't suggest you did," Weaver said gravely. "Tell me, did you consider his claims as any serious menace?"

"I considered them bosh!" Ames exclaimed bitterly.

"And when you told Newton that he threatened you with some sort of vengeance?"

"That's it."

"And you told him forcibly to get out and stay out—perhaps added a few trimmings?"

"To be exact," Ames said," I think I said to Newton that he was a damned scoundrel, and his claim was nonsense. I said, 'Get out and don't mention this again to me—or anybody else—if you put any value on your precious skin!' Words to that effect, anyway."

"And you never saw him alive after that?"

"No. I saw him alive but once."

Weaver considered.

"Where were you last night, Mr. Ames?"

"At home," Justin Ames answered promptly. "I have been writing on a play—an idea of mine—and last night I staid home all evening to work on it."

"You dined at home, worked on this play, and went to bed; is that it? What time did you go to bed?"

Justin Ames thought a moment. Patrolman Madigan, watching from his corner, noticed that momentarily the pupils of his eyes narrowed. Then Ames answered, meeting Weaver's glance steadily: "About one o'clock, as nearly as I remember. Yes, just about one o'clock."

Kelly, Ames's chauffeur, had been sitting with his left leg crossed over his right. Patrolman Madigan noticed that now he shifted his position, crossing his right leg over his left.

"You did not use your automobile during the evening?"

"No, sir."

"Nor loan it to any other person?"

"I did not."

"Do you know if any other person used it?"

"I do not. Kelly might know."

Weaver turned to the chauffeur.

"Just change seats with Mr. Ames, will you, Kelly? Thanks. H'm! Let's see; you are Michael Kelly, Mr. Ames's chauffeur?"

Kelly nodded assent.

Patrolman Madigan, who had been on the point of bursting for several minutes, burst now. "Lieutenant!" he interrupted.

Weaver hushed the patrolman with a wave of the hand. Madigan subsided, but he gave signs of having something important to say and suppressing his information with difficulty.

"Kelly," the detective went on, "you heard Mr. Ames say he did not order his car out of the garage last night. Is that correct?"

"Yes, sir, sure it's correct."

"Did you take the car out during the evening?"

"I did not. I took the evening off, and went to a picture show. I come home at half-past eleven, or maybe twelve, and went to bed."

"Did anybody take the car out?"

"How could they? I had one garage door key and Mr. Ames had the other one. An I looked at the gas and oil first thing this morning, and the gauges show the gas and oil stand just as they did when I brought the car in yesterday afternoon. If the officer says he saw our car in Central Park last night the officer's made a mistake; that's all there is about that!"

Patrolman Madigan stiffened in his chair, and his face flushed with righteous indignation, but he managed to hold his tongue.

"Well," Weaver said mildly, "just one more question, then. Did you happen to see Mr. Ames last night?"

Kelly looked about the room. He looked at Ames, then at Madigan, then at Weaver, and then at the rug under his feet. His weathered face burned a little redder.

"Mr. Ames," Kelly said appealingly, "have I got to answer his questions?"

"Certainly," Ames said, though he looked at Kelly rather curiously as he said it.

"Well," said Kelly, "then I did see Mr. Ames. "I live in Mr. Ames's house on the third floor, and my key opens the tradesman's door in the area. And when I come home I was under the shadow of the steps—it's one of these old-fashioned high stoops—getting out my key like, and the front door opened and Mr. Ames come out. He was wrapped up in a big coat, with the collar turned up high, but I knew it was Mr. Ames because I saw his face. And he went down the steps in a hurry and walked away—run away you might say. I was for calling to him and asking did he want the car, but he went quick and in a hurry like, and I says to myself he don't want to be bothered about the car or is maybe going to get a

taxi, so I said nothing. And this was about midnight it happened." Kelly paused, rather out of breath.

If Detective John Weaver was surprised, one could not guess it from his face or manner.

"Is that all, Kelly?" he asked perfunctorily.

"No, sir," said Kelly, "it ain't. It happened I'd drunk some coffee before I come home and wasn't sleeping. And about one-thirty or a little later I had my window up and was taking some physical culture exercises in front of it, so as to get myself to sleep, and I saw Mr. Ames come home and go back into the house." Kelly stopped, then added impulsively: "But I want to tell you right now there's nothing criminal about a man's leaving his house any time of day or night he wants to, and it's his own business, too. Mr. Ames ain't any more mixed up in this thing than I am."

Ames said gently: "Thanks, old man. I'm glad you told Mr. Weaver the truth."

Then Ames looked steadily at Weaver, and his jaw became more prominent, his eye took a colder, more defiant glint.

"Don't ask me where I went, Weaver. It's no use. I absolutely refuse to say."

"All right," said Weaver, "I won't. But you know this looks odd."

"Then it can keep on looking odd. I was out of the house between twelve and half-past one. I admit it. And you can accuse me of anything you want to, but even if you send me up for life I'll be damned if I'll tell you where I went!"

"All right," Weaver agreed again. "But one question. Do you ever drive your own limousine? Can you drive it?"

"Of course I can. But I didn't drive it last night."

"He did not!" Kelly seconded.

Weaver asked: "But you could have got it out of the garage and driven it, if you had felt like it?"

"I certainly could," Justin Ames replied.

"Then that seems to be all," the detective decided.

"No, it ain't all. Not by a long shot!" Patrolman Madigan was on his feet, and his finger pointed dramatically at Kelly. "If this fellow is Michael Kelly, like everybody says, then the fellow that was driving Mr. Ames's car last night ain't Michael Kelly, because the man that told me he was Kelly when I talked to him in the park was tall, and this man is short. He was a big, tall chap wrapped up in a big coat, with the collar turned up around his face. He was as tall as Mr. Ames!"

There was a silence then, a silence of tightened nerves. Weaver broke it finally with a sigh.

"Well, that's all! Now, Ames, if you'll be good enough to dictate a statement of everything to a stenographer, and have Kelly dictate his story, and both of you wait in the outer office for about an hour——"

"Is this a polite way of saying I'm under arrest?" Ames asked belligerently.

Weaver hesitated.

"No. You're not under arrest—yet. But it might be well to have your lawyer drop in here."

"Meaning you may arrest me a little later?"

"That's the way of it."

Justin Ames flushed.

"All right, Weaver. Arrest me whenever you feel like it. But I'll tell you right now I've said every word I'm going to say from here to the electric chair. I won't tell you where I was last night, and be damned to you!"

CHAPTER THREE

THE BRASS BUTTON

DETECTIVE JOHN WEAVER and Patrolman Madigan sat in the library of Justin Ames's house on Fifty-ninth street. They had been questioning Ames's household staff, consisting of a Japanese butler, a cook, a housemaid and last, and seemingly most important, Underwood, Ames's valet.

The room was at the rear of the old-fashioned house, a deep, wide room, with a row of windows across the rear wall. The morning sun came in gratefully warm through the parted curtains.

Ames had furnished his library with several deeply upholstered lounging chairs and a broad business desk that stood near one of the windows. Weaver and Madigan sat at this

desk. Farther back in the room was a handsome library table, and near it a big dictionary reading desk and a huge terrestrial globe. Most of the wall space was covered with shelves that held many volumes, shelves beginning about waist high of a man and extending to within the easy upward reach of a man's arm. The paneling left above these shelves was ornamented with several pictures and several collections of odd weapons that included savage shields, war clubs, spears, old horse pistols, sabers, dirks—all manner of unusual weapons of violence.

Underwood, the valet, sat facing the two inquisitors. He sat in a pose suggesting respectful attention, his hands folded in his lap, his body bent forward stiffly from the hips. The man wore clothes of sober black, with white linen, and an old-fashioned black string-tie. His face was long and mournful of expression. The skin was pale. Underwood's eyes were covered by lightly tinted glasses, and he peered slightly as though his vision was poor. Altogether Underwood looked like a comic artist's conception of an undertaker, or the absurdly severe figure sometimes labeled "Blue Laws." His voice was low and soothing, and his manner punctilious.

The valet's story was simple and straightforward. He had last seen Justin Ames at about ten o'clock in the evening, when he was told by Ames he would not be needed longer that day. He then went to bed and slept the sleep attributed to the just. He had roused in the morning to hear that Mr. Ames's name was involved in a murder case, and evidently was deeply shocked.

"A most extraordinary happening," Underwood considered it. "In my forty years of service I give you my word, Mr. Weaver, I never was connected with such a case! I have been in some of the best houses in England, sir, but nothing like this! Very low taste, I call it!"

"You announced a visitor the other day, a man who gave the name of Newton and called on Mr. Ames?" Weaver asked suddenly.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know what occurred between Newton and Mr. Ames on that visit?"

"Can't say, sir, I'm sure."

"Oh, come now! Think! You must have heard something."

Underwood coughed gently behind his hand.

"Very little, sir, really. Except just before the man left. I staid near the door, out in the hall there, because the man was a stranger, and I supposed he would be going soon. Just before the door opened and Mr. Ames called me I heard the men's voices raised rather angrily. Quite distinctly I heard the visitor say something about having a just claim, and if Mr. Ames didn't see reason he'd make him see it."

"Did you hear Ames's reply?"

"Well, yes, sir. I couldn't very well help hearing a bit, sir. Mr. Ames shouted—shouted is the word, Mr. Weaver—that he was going to throw the man out. Naturally I came near the door then. He said: 'I'll throw you out, and if you ever come back here, by God, I'll see that you're taken out feet first next time.' He was quite enraged, sir. He shouted for me, and I opened the door and showed this man Newton out. Both of them seemed very upset, I must say."

"You do not know the cause of the quarrel?"

"Not exactly, sir, but I think it was a business matter. There was some mention of a claim of some sort, or I thought they said claim."

Weaver nodded satisfaction. His next question was quite irrelevant.

"I believe the maid said this room has not been cleaned since last night?"

"Yes, sir, she said that."

"It has not been disturbed?"

"Oh, no, sir. Mr. Ames always straightens his desk before he lets the maid clean. He never lets his papers be disturbed; and you can see they are lying as he left them last night."

"Thank you, Underwood. I think that's all. We'll be here a few minutes more to check up our notes. Just let us alone until we ring for you."

Underwood rose.

"Yes, sir. Thank you, sir."

As the valet reached the door Weaver halted him.

"Oh, by the way, you are familiar with Mr. Ames's clothes, of course?"

"Naturally, Mr. Weaver."

"Did you ever see any brass buttons?"

"Brass buttons! Really——"

"On Mr. Ames's clothing, I mean. Does he wear anything that fastens with a brass button?"

Underwood smiled a superior smile and shook his head. "Oh, no, sir! No, indeed! Gentlemen's clothes are not fastened with brass buttons, Mr. Weaver!"

Weaver nodded. "No, I suppose not." He glanced about the room. "Oh, Underwood!"

"Yes, sir?"

"I notice something missing from that group of weapons on the wall. You see it? If you look closely you will see a slight variation in the color of the wall paper. The color has faded except where some weapon hung and protected the paper from the light. By the rough outline I should say a war club had hung there until recently."

"Why, yes, sir; that's odd! A club did hang there. It was there yesterday evening, I noticed."

"Who took it away?"

"I'm sure, sir, I haven't the slightest idea."

"All right. That's all for the present."

Weaver closed the door after Underwood. Then he stepped swiftly to a rug in the centre of the room near the desk and, stooping, picked up something which he held out toward Madigan on the palm of his hand.

Madigan looked and saw a brass button.

It was such a button as those on the murdered man's coat. Several broken black threads adhered to it.

"By all the saints! The missing button. And here! Sure, that looks black for Mr. Justin Ames!" exclaimed Patrolman Madigan.

"Yes," Weaver agreed soberly, "that button and the war club missing from the wall; take everything together, and it looks mighty black for Justin Ames!"

CHAPTER FOUR

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

DETECTIVE JOHN WEAVER walked over to one of the long windows of the library and stood looking into Mr. Justin Ames's garden for some minutes. He seemed to be checking up his case.

Patrolman Madigan watched him with the respect, almost reverence, of a younger and less experienced officer.

"Madigan," Weaver said abruptly, "ask Underwood, the butler, the cook and the maid to come in here. I want all of them in here. Then you go through the house and make a thorough search for a war club—a club of natural wood with knobs all over it, the one that has been taken from that wall. Here is Ames's garage key. You had better look there also. Look thoroughly."

Madigan left on this errand, and presently Weaver addressed the entire household staff. He bade them make themselves comfortable, and began a leisurely questioning of each one, apparently a rather aimless questioning done with the purpose of giving Madigan plenty of time for his search.

Underwood was the last addressed.

"How long have you been in Mr. Ames's employ?"

"Fifteen years and three months, sir."

"In this house?"

"Yes, sir."

"You knew Mr. Ames's father, then?"

"Yes, indeed, sir. I was his personal valet before he died."

"Did you know anything of his business?"

"Very little."

"Did you ever see this man Newton, who called on Mr. Ames the other day?"

"No, sir."

"Ever hear about him, hear his name mentioned?"

"No, sir."

"Before you became a valet what was your occupation?"

Underwood smiled a slightly bored and superior smile. "Bless you, sir, a real valet is born to service. My father brought me up to it in England."

"So you have always been in service?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Married?"

"No, sir."

"Engaged? Interested in any woman?"

The cook and housemaid showed signs of intense interest in the valet's reply. They exchanged smiles and giggled nervously.

Underwood said with placid superiority:

"The gentler sex has never intrigued me, sir."

Even Weaver smiled a little. Then he asked abruptly and a little sharply:

"What do you think of Justin Ames?"

Underwood was startled. He leaned forward hurriedly. "I—I—really, sir, I don't understand."

"Yes, you do. You've been Ames's body servant fifteen years. You know all his whims, his habits, everything about him, better than any person in this house. Circumstances look badly for your master. What's your opinion? Would Justin Ames be capable of killing a man who might threaten his fortune; who might threaten his peace of mind and happiness? If he was angry, or afraid, would he do such a thing?"

The valet seemed confused, embarrassed. His feelings were outraged. He protested at once and more vehemently than his usual manner. "The idea is ridiculous! Mr. Ames is a *gentleman.*"

"And you don't consider that a *gentleman* would commit murder under any circumstance; is that it?"

"Certainly not! Mr. Ames would never do such a thing."

John Weaver grunted rather scornfully.

"Look here," he cried and held out, so that all might see, the brass button he had found on the floor.

"Did you ever see that button before, Underwood?"

"No, sir," the valet said, unperturbed. "I never saw such a button."

"I have," Weaver answered sternly. "The three mates to that button are on the coat of the murdered man. The fourth button was torn off, evidently in a violent struggle. Evidently also it was torn off in a recent struggle—I should say in the struggle that led to the man's murder. And I found that button right here on the rug in Mr. Ames's library. Look closely and you'll see the torn threads clinging to it. It is the missing button from Newton's coat! The natural presumption is that Lafe Newton met his death in this house, in this room, and at some hour between midnight and this morning. And also the natural presumption is that somebody in this house killed him."

The detective surveyed the startled servants sternly.

Wide eyes and open mouths met his gaze.

The two women breathed fast.

The Japanese butler forgot his oriental composure and made little hissing noises through his prominent teeth.

Only Underwood, though he looked somewhat white and alarmed, kept an outward composure.

Weaver repeated:

"Newton was killed in this house by some person who lives in this house. All of you have told stories which preliminary checking seems to prove true. The one man who cannot account for his movements in a satisfactory manner is the one man who would have a possible motive for murdering this stranger. That man is Justin Ames, your employer. What do you say to that, Underwood?"

Underwood said with an effort apparent to all of them: "I say that your idea is ridiculous, if you'll pardon me, sir." He said it with a show of spirit badly masked by his habitual deference. "Ridiculous!" he repeated. "I'd wager everything I have Mr. Ames is not guilty! Absurd! Most absurd, sir, if you will overlook my boldness in saying it."

Weaver answered with fine scorn:

"Your acting does honor to your sense of loyalty. But you're wasting time shielding Justin Ames. The evidence is against him—all of it——" He broke off. Madigan had come into the room. "Well, Madigan?"

"Here she is," Madigan grinned cheerily. "Found her in the garage under some cotton waste and rags."

Madigan produced a hideous weapon, an ancient war club of some wood like iron covered with knobs.

Detective John Weaver examined the instrument of death and nodded his satisfaction.

"Blood stains and a bit of Newton's hair still sticking to it. Very well. That will be all. You servants go on about your business." He picked up the telephone, called police headquarters, and ordered the immediate arrest of Justin Ames on a charge of murder.

The houshold staff, lingering with fearful fascination, heard his words and gasped.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIND THE WOMAN!

THE arrest of Justin Ames, heir to a fortune and a name known widely by means of advertising, on the charge of murdering a waiter and throwing the body into Central Park lake, furnished the evening editions of the newspapers with sensational headlines, photographs, and much comment.

Detective John Weaver figured in the news prominently. The papers even carried enlarged half-tone pictures of the brass button which seemed to lay the guilt at Ames's door beyond a doubt.

It was, by all odds, the biggest news sensation of many months.

Justin Ames occupied a cell in the Tombs prison.

His lawyers were doing all in their power to secure his liberty under bail bonds, but on the day of his arrest had made little progress.

Detective Weaver and Patrolman Madigan, who also had come in for considerable attention from the newspaper reporters, called at Ames's cell after dinner that Tuesday evening.

They had not seen Ames since the interview in Weaver's office that same morning.

At sight of Weaver and the patrolman Ames's face darkened with anger.

"And I thought you were a friend of mine!" was his greeting to the detective, given in a bitter tone.

Weaver answered calmly: "I am."

"This looks like it!"

Ames made a gesture that included the barred cell and the bare, hideous prison.

"I'm your friend," Weaver repeated. "But I would have to imprison my own mother if evidence showed she was guilty. I can't help what you think of me. I had to do what my oath demands. Now, Ames, will you believe me and talk reasonably? I'd like to help you out, if there's any way to do it."

"What do you mean?"

Ames modulated his bitterness. He glanced at Weaver with an appeal that was unmistakable.

"I mean just what I say. I want to help you. If you are not guilty——"

"*If!* Good heavens, you say *if!* Do you have any doubt of my innocence?"

"Certainly," Weaver said coolly. "If I had none, you'd not be here. I don't go about arresting my friends for amusement! But there is one thing you must clear up if you are going to clear yourself of this charge. Where did you go between midnight and half-past one o'clock? Tell the truth."

Ames flushed, then paled. His eyes glittered and his jaw set at a stubborn angle.

He shook his head slowly.

"You will not tell?"

"Never!"

Weaver pleaded.

"Ames, believe me, your life may hang on that information. My business is evidence of this sort. It has been my life study. I tell you, as God is my witness, I have evidence in hand sufficient to convince the average jury of your guilt. Nine courts out of ten would send you to prison for life at the least. If you were innocent in that errand you undertook when you left your house last night, you must prove it by telling all the truth. Your life and happiness depend on it."

Justin Ames heard him out without change of expression.

His lips tightened to a hard line.

Weaver's plea, his earnestness, had moved Ames.

But the man was determined with an extraordinary resolution to keep his secret.

"You'll never—find out—from me—where I went," he said slowly.

The detective began angrily:

"Well, of all the natural-born idiots."

The arrival of a turnkey stopped the exclamation.

The turnkey handed Ames a card.

Ames glanced at the name on the card and flushed.

"I cannot see anybody," he said to the turnkey.

"All right. Only the lady said——"

Ames repeated hastily:

"I can't see her. Ask her to leave at once."

But Detective Weaver interposed: "Bring the lady up here, Jerry."

Ames cried angrily:

"No! No, damn you, I—— Weaver! Keep out of this! I warn you!"

Weaver repeated:

"Ask her to come up, please, Jerry."

"I won't see her. I won't see anybody!" Ames cried. "Damn you, keep out of my affairs! Damn you, I——"

"You haven't anything to say about it," Weaver told him sternly. "You're in jail, accused of murder. You'll do as you're told."

Patrolman Madigan, lingering fascinated, gasped with surprise. Never had the patrolman seen a prisoner so treated. And John Weaver, of all men, to do a thing like this!

The turnkey performed his errand, bringing to the cell a young woman whose plain rich coat trimmed with expensive fur, whose tasteful hat and shoes and bearing and carefully tended beauty showed she had wealth and good breeding.

At the sight of her John Weaver looked slightly astonished.

But before he could say anything Ames had called out loudly:

"Cora! Careful! This man is a police detective."

"Of course he is," the woman exclaimed. "It's John Weaver. There isn't a brighter man on the force. Hello, John!"

"Mrs. Reed!" Weaver exclaimed, taking the hand she offered.

Mrs. Cora Reed made a little grimace.

"You have always called me Cora since we played together as children. Why this formality?"

John Weaver, who had known the young woman, as she said, since they were children, might have explained that the loss of his own personal fortune several years before, necessitating his lending his unusual talents to the metropolitan police force, had made many of his former friends noticeably distant of late. He did not, but his pleased expression showed he appreciated Cora Reed's steadfast friendship.

Ames meantime hovered in the background, frowning, trying to catch the visitor's eye, trying to signal her to be careful what she said. Cora Reed answered this pantomime in words.

"Justin, it's no use making faces at me. It's no use pretending. I'm going to tell John everything."

"No!" Ames exclaimed. "No, no. Are you mad?"

"I'd be worse than that not to tell. I'd be inhuman not to tell the truth after my folly has got you into this danger! John, I want you to listen to my statement. I can tell you where Justin Ames went that hour and a half which he will not account for. The papers say that you base your case against him on that. That is true?"

"The case is based largely on that," Weaver said gravely. "That and a very complete chain of circumstances. But if you break one link of this chain, Cora, the entire chain is useless. If you can account for Justin Ames's movements at the time when Patrolman Madigan here is convinced he saw him in Central Park, then you have disproved my case and done a great service to Justin Ames. For his sake and the sake of justice, tell what you know!"

Ames protested wildly:

"You shan't tell!"

But Mrs. Cora Reed stopped him.

"I must tell. Whatever the consequences are, my silly conduct got you into this terrible fix." She turned to Weaver. "John, you know my husband, Charles Reed?"

"Slightly," Weaver said. "You were married about a year ago, I think?"

"Eight months ago. I had every reason to think it the happiest marriage possible—myself the happiest woman alive."

"I'm sorry if you are not."

"But I am happy!" Cora Reed exclaimed, then added perplexingly, "and terribly unhappy, too! John, the man I married is everything a woman can love, but one. He is maddeningly jealous of me. He is insanely suspicious. The attentions of other men to me make him perfectly unreasonable. And I—you know what I am. I love company, attentions, excitement. Oh, I'm to blame as well as he! And I admit I deliberately encouraged the attentions of old friends because I thought to cure him of this absurd jealousy. We quarreled several times. Yesterday we quarreled bitterly, so bitterly I vowed to leave him forever. Late in the evening I packed a bag and left our place in the country. I came to the city, and by the time I reached Grand Central station I saw what a little fool I had been. All I wanted in the world was to go back to him and ask his forgiveness. And it was too

late to go back that night. There were no more trains. I had only a little money. Then I remembered Justin, who always would do anything for me. I telephoned him, told him I was in terrible trouble, and he met me at Grand Central. Justin hired a rented car and started me home to Charles; that must have been about one o'clock in the morning. He cautioned me then not to tell Charles who had helped me return, not to do or say anything that would rouse his jealousy again. And Justin Ames, rather than make his friend any trouble, is in this cell; yes, and ready to die, I suppose, for some crime he knows nothing about!"

Mrs. Reed's eyes were getting misty with tears.

She went uncertainly to Ames and laid her hands on his shoulders.

"You wonderful — absurd — chivalrous goose!" she cried. "Did you suppose I'd let you do that!"

Ames groaned.

"But, Cora! You don't understand! When Charley Reed knows I met you at Grand Central——"

Mrs. Reed stopped him with a little laugh that was half a sob.

"Foolish! Don't you suppose I told him everything? Everything! Just as soon as I heard of your arrest. He sent me here. He's waiting now in our car outside, waiting to come and thank you for what you did for me."

Detective Weaver turned to Madigan.

"Go down to the street, please, and ask Mr. Reed to step up here."

When Reed had joined the group about Ames Detective John Weaver drew the patrolman aside.

"What do you think of your case now, Madigan?"

Madigan made a face of perplexity.

"Sure, I don't know what to think at all, at all, unless——" His face brightened. "Maybe them two are just making it up to help out Ames?" he suggested hopefully.

Weaver shook his head decidedly.

"No. They're telling the truth. It clears Ames. And I'm glad, of course, but, Madigan, it knocks the spots out of our case! Who did kill Newton?"

CHAPTER SIX

THE TRAP IS PREPARED

PATROLMAN MADIGAN groaned.

"Blessed saints be good to us! Now we'll never find the murderer."

"Never is a long time," Detective Weaver smiled.

"But this Mrs. Reed's story breaks our case entirely. All our evidence is just so much junk."

"Not all. Most of it is sound, I'm sure. Simply we made one error and reached the wrong conclusion. We'll try again."

"Sure, I'd like to know how we can!" Madigan exclaimed hopelessly.

"I'll show you," Weaver promised.

The detective returned to the trio in the cell. He said: "Ames, of course we can't hold you any longer. I want to tell you that nobody is more relieved and glad than I am. Just as quickly as possible I will secure your release from this place. That may need an hour or so to do. In the meantime the warden will be glad to put one of the vacant offices at your disposal, and there, at least, you will have a little more comfort than a cell. And, if you don't mind, I wish Mr. and Mrs. Reed would stay here with you until the order for your release comes."

"Of course!" Cora Reed agreed quickly.

"And, Ames," Weaver went on, "try not to think too badly of a man who has to do his duty, no matter if it involves the happiness of his friends. Before I consider anything or anybody else I must find the murderer of this man Newton."

"Don't say another word about that!" Ames said heartily. "If I can do anything to help."

"You can help this much: keep the news of your release a secret for a few hours. Don't telephone to any friends until I give the word."

Ames gave his promise to the request.

Weaver and Madigan left the Tombs and stepped into a taxi. The detective directed that they be taken to Justin Ames's house.

As they rode Weaver explained.

"Cora Reed broke one link in our chain of evidence. That doesn't mean that the entire

chain is worthless. It means that we made one mistake, and a natural mistake, when Ames refused to explain."

"The blooming fool!" Madigan cried. "Anybody would think him guilty for lying like he did."

"Well," Weaver sighed, "a gentleman has certain duties, Madigan. One of them is to protect a woman's good name and happiness. And that duty looks as big to Ames as mine does to me, I dare say. Never mind that part of it now! The thing we have to do is to find the murderer of Newton."

Madigan groaned dismally.

"Sure, it would be easier to borrow a dollar from old Kaiser Bill!"

"No," Weaver said, surprisingly calm, "I don't agree. It should be fairly easy."

"Easy? Wow!"

"Simple, then. As I say, the rest of our chain has proved strong and true. The murderer of Newton is, by all logic, one of that household. The murder was done in that house. I think I know a way to find him or her. And I want you to follow my lead carefully. Do just as you're told and say nothing to anybody about what we have learned tonight. If we play our cards right I think we can win."

Madigan made a humorous pretense of dizziness.

"You're too swift for me," he said, "but then you got brains. I guess I'm just a flat-footed cop, after all!"

The Japanese butler admitted them to Justin Ames's house.

The man looked somewhat put out to see who the visitors were. His yellow face turned a sicklier hue from surprise.

"Are all the servants in?" Weaver asked. the butler.

"Iss, sir. All here plesent to-night."

"Send them to Mr. Ames's library at once. It is very important. None of you must leave this house. It is watched by the police."

The butler choked on this information.

Finally he managed to gasp:

"Iss, sir," and hurried on his errand.

Weaver took up his position at Ames's desk, with Madigan at his right hand.

The butler, the cook, the housemaid and Underwood, the valet, presented themselves, rather breathless. All were wide-eyed with excitement and morbid curiosity.

Weaver spoke to them:

"This case has taken a serious turn—a very serious turn. I want you all to listen carefully, and remember that you are asked to assist the police. It is the duty of every good citizen to aid the police and see that the law is enforced. I am going to take you into my confidence. A most regrettable accident has occurred."

Weaver paused for emphasis.

The servants gaped. Even Madigan's mouth was open slightly.

"You remember," the detective went on, "that a brass button was found on the rug in this library this morning?"

A general nodding of heads.

"That button is a most important piece of evidence. On that discovery the police have arrested Justin Ames. That button is the item that clinches our case against Justin Ames. It convicts him of a foul murder."

Again the detective paused and all the heads nodded in agreement.

"I am sorry to tell you," Weaver resumed, "that the brass button has been lost."

There was a general exchange of startled glances.

"It has been lost—mislaid," Weaver went on. "The button was put in the keeping of this patrolman, my assistant on this case, and he unfortunately mislaid it. As nearly as we can trace the loss it occurred some time to-day while Patrolman Madigan was in this house."

Madigan's mouth was open again.

He was just on the point of beginning a very angry denial.

But he remembered suddenly that Weaver had told him to play up to any lead he made. So Madigan played up.

"Sure, Mr. Weaver," he groaned, "I'm the butter-fingers for fair! But I'm dead sure I was looking at that bit of a brass button when I was in here this afternoon, and I must have laid it by some place, or it might have rolled out of my pocket like."

"Well," Weaver said, "it's lost, anyway. Without it our case against Justin Ames is ruined. But the lost can be found. It must be found. You understand, all of you? That button must be found! Unless we find that,

we have no case. And I ask you all to search this house now; search it thoroughly from cellar to attic, and bring me back the missing button. I'm asking you servants to do this because you know the house far better than I do, or the police would. So start at once, please, and I'll wait here for the news."

At his gesture of dismissal the little group dissolved, and the sound of their voices as they searched corridors and rooms faded gradually to silence.

John Weaver sat at the desk and waited.

Patrolman Madigan would have liked to ask him questions, but Weaver's expression forbade it.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE TRAP IS SPRUNG

DETECTIVE WEAVER and Patrolman Madigan had been sitting for several hours. Nothing had happened.

The servants were making a thorough search of Justin Ames's house, looking for the brass button.

At times their voices could be heard in argument.

Finally came the sound of muffled exclamations and excitement.

The muffled noises indicated that something interesting had happened.

Patrolman Madigan started up.

"By the powers, I believe they've found the brass button!"

Weaver agreed quietly:

"I wouldn't be a bit surprised."

The servants returned in a body. Their faces indicated success. It was Underwood who advanced gravely and laid the brass button on the desk before the detective.

"I think this must be it, sir," the valet said with his usual dignity.

John Weaver smiled.

"Well, now, that's fine! And who was the lucky one? Come, don't be modest. Somebody deserves the congratulations of the police. Who is it?"

Underwood coughed modestly behind his hand

The other servants pointed at him with pleased smiles.

"It was Mr. Underwood, sir!" the housemaid cried eagerly. "He's wonderfully clever at looking for lost things."

"Oh, it was just a matter of being patient and thorough, sir," the valet deprecated. "The button had been dropped in a dark corner of the hall. I dare say the patrolman let it fall from his pocket. And I happened to be lucky."

"Yes," Weaver agreed, "you were—very—lucky."

Weaver rose, coming from behind the desk.

"I congratulate you, Underwood," he exclaimed, holding out his hand.

The valet hesitated, then extended his own right hand.

Weaver caught that hand, but did not shake it.

Instead, to the astonishment of them all, he gripped it with fingers like steel clamps, and with his left hand captured Underwood's left arm.

Over his shoulder he said to Madigan one word:

"Handcuffs."

In a twinkling the patrolman had the steel links locked over Underwood's wrists. Bidding Madigan watch the prisoner, Weaver telephoned to the Tombs prison, and ordered the immediate release of Justin Ames, asking that Mr. Ames come to his house at once.

As for Underwood, the man had gone a dirty white.

His knees sagged beneath him, and he staggered to a chair, where he sat silent, his head bowed, the target for the stares of the other servants.

So he remained, silent, overwhelmed, until Justin Ames and the Reeds burst into the room and stared in astonishment at the strange tableau.

It was then Weaver addressed the valet.

"Just look here, will you, Underwood? I asked you all to find that brass button, didn't I? And you found it! Very clever, Underwood, very clever indeed to produce a brass button, torn threads and all, the only trouble being that the original button *was not lost.* Here it is."

From his pocket Weaver then took the but-

ton torn from Newton's coat and laid it beside the substitute Underwood had provided.

Leveling an accusing finger at his prisoner, Weaver cried sternly:

"Underwood, only one man in the world could be anxious to shift the guilt of this atrocious crime to the shoulders of an innocent person. That one man is the man who murdered Newton!"

Underwood raised his head slowly, as if Weaver's tone forced him to do so.

"Yes," he said huskily, "that is true. I killed Lafe Newton."

Later Underwood dictated his story to a police stenographer, and the confession, properly witnessed, served to send him to prison for life. It was the story of a covetous and embittered man.

"I was not born in England," Underwood's confession read. "My real name is Wood. At one time I was employed in the little factory where Justin Ames, Sr., began his business of making toilet preparations. I was discharged for drunkenness.

"In after years I saw old Mr. Ames make a great fortune from his inventions. I remembered the old grudge. I hated him. I wanted some of the fortune he made, enough to make me comfortable.

"Years had changed me, and I further changed myself by shaving my beard and mustache and wearing tinted glasses. I joined Mr. Ames's household as a valet. I hoped for an opportunity to get my hands on some of his valuables. My chance never seemed to come. Then Mr. Ames, senior, died, and his son inherited everything.

"It was then I saw a chance to use my former knowledge of the business. I got Lafe Newton to make demands for me, to frighten young Mr. Ames into making a settlement on the claim his father had stolen the old formula.

"But Newton failed completely. Then Newton came to me that Monday evening. He was very angry at the failure. He demanded money from me on the threat to expose me. I killed him in anger. His body was hidden in the closet of my own room at the top of the house. I waited a chance to get rid of it.

"While I was waiting I heard the telephone ring. That was about midnight. I listened on the extension telephone upstairs and heard Mrs. Reed ask Ames to come to her at the Grand Central. I knew Kelly was away. That gave me my chance to get Newton's body into the limousine and take it to the park lake. I hid the club I killed Newton with in the garage. Before I put the car back I replaced the gas and oil I had used.

"I was glad when the patrolman spoke to me in the park. That identified the car and threw suspicion on Mr. Ames. I hoped that Ames would suffer for my crime. That would have been a fine revenge!

"I planned everything and I overlooked no detail. I left no loophole for failure. I figured the button from Newton's coat would surely convict Ames.

"Yet I failed. I failed because the police sent a man against me who is brighter than I am. His trick in pretending to lose the brass button made me too eager. I played into his hands. I thought I was bright, but I admit now that that man was brighter than I am.

"The man I refer to is Detective John Weaver."

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Sweating Gold Coins

SHORT-WEIGHT gold coins have been annoyingly common in the metal circulating medium. Bankers and others who handle this character of money frequently came across light pieces. The discovery once of nearly three hundred dollars in light two-and-a-half-dollar gold pieces tendered in payment of custom duties by a prominent importer, by directing attention to the subject and exciting scrutiny, led to the detection of numerous pieces short in weight, showing that there had been in operation a systematic scheme for robbing the Government by stealing metal from coins. Officers of the United States secret service trace the coins through different hands and thereby locate the offenders.

The process of robbery, which is familiarly known as "sweating" coins, was formerly practiced to a large extent, but of late years few instances of it have come to the attention of the authorities.

From a careful examination of light pieces, it is quite evident that the thief is not doing his work by the old hand method of shaking the coins in a bag and then gathering the dust by means of quicksilver. Up-to-date crooks have brought into requisition the rapid agency of electricity. The service of an ordinary galvanic battery and some cheap acid is all that is necessary to conduct the operation by the electric process.

An authority has estimated that about fifty cents' worth of gold can be removed in this way from a ten-dollar gold piece without exciting the suspicion of the casual observer. To the skilled eye of an expert, however, the effect is generally very apparent at a glance, and it does not always require the scales to determine whether the coin is correct or not.

The electric process of stealing from coins is not altogether a new scheme. The Government officials years ago captured in northern New York a band of Italians who were operating extensively on this plan. Few but foreigners practice "sweating" in this country. It is an institution of theft much more common in Europe than on this side of the Atlantic, and those who operate here are usually persons who have been driven from their own country for the same reason.

Before the discovery of the use of electricity for plating "sweating" was done with the use of bags. A buckskin sack similar to the sacks used by Western miners to gather gold in was the favorite instrument. After the coins were well shaken in this the dust was beaten out and the particles collected by means of quicksilver, which rapidly forms amalgamation. When sacks of cotton material are used they are burned, and the stealings collected by reduction in a crucible. Some idea of the readiness with which gold can be removed from coins in this manner is found in the result of a series of investigations made some years ago in the mint in this city. By these it was shown that $5 was lost by abrasion every time a million of dollars in gold coin was handled.

The experiments were conducted with bags containing $5,000 each, and it was shown that the mere lifting of the two hundred bags, making up a million dollars, to a truck to be removed to another vault, resulted in the loss stated and that their transfer from the truck again made a second similar loss.

Gold, while in circulation, is handled less than any other medium. It is usually kept in the vaults of banks for demand rarely made, and for this reason the loss by abrasion is but about one-half of one per cent. in any twenty years. In a twenty-dollar gold piece, the standard weight of which is 516 grains, the Government allowance for loss by abrasion is 2.5 grains.

YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH IT

BY

CARL GLICK

CHAPTER ONE

"SPEAKING of murders," said Harwell—they were discussing that mysterious death of a certain notorious New York club man, which still remained unsolved—"I don't know but what it is easier for a man to plan a murder and get away with it than it is for a detective to find out who did it."

"Treason!" exclaimed Carson, a faint smile curving his thin lips. "That's a criticism of our efficient police force."

"Not at all."

"I agree with Harwell," said Marston, his best friend. "Look at the number of crimes committed every year in which the criminal is never discovered."

"Rather too general a statement," put in Carson, who always made himself a little disagreeable. "Be more specific."

"Well," said Harwell, "suppose I wanted to murder good old Marston here, which of course I don't." They all laughed. The two men had been inseparable for years. "But suppose I did. Planned it out in cold blood, you know. I wager I could do it and get away with it without leaving a clue that would betray me."

"Perhaps you are right," said Carson.

"But don't try it," laughed Marston.

"Surely not, old man. I hope you will outlive me."

They were having dinner together in the grill room of the Biltmore. The two men often dined here. This evening Carson had joined them—on his own invitation.

He stirred his coffee meditatively. "Well," he said soberly, "if you do make up your mind to murder Marston, let me know. It would be interesting to see how you get away with it."

They all laughed.

"But there isn't any danger, is there?" said Harwell. "You'd be the last man I'd want to be electrocuted for." And then he changed the conversation to such interesting topics as the latest beauty of "The Follies," the price of gasoline, and where to buy genuine Gordon gin.

Dinner over, Carson left them, having a theatre engagement.

Harwell and Marston still lingered over their cigars. They watched Carson as he made his way between the tables, turning at the door to nod and smile.

"Poor chap," said Marston, "I think he took it rather hard when he was blackballed at the Aztec Club."

Harwell shrugged his shoulders. "No one

to blame but himself." He glanced at his watch. "Whew! Later than I thought. I must be running along."

"Got something on?"

"Well—yes."

"I see you don't intend asking me to join you."

"Wish I could, old man," smiled back Harwell, "but you see——"

"I understand. Another intrigue. Look out! Some day you'll get into trouble, Frank. Jealous husbands are supposed to be rattling good shots. But then you always did have such interesting affairs with women. Part of the joy of being a bachelor, I suppose. I envy you your luck."

"It does make life worth living."

Marston sighed. "A prosaic old fool like myself. Nothing to do but go home and finish the novel I'm reading. And when you have a wife in Europe and two grown daughters. Humph!" He crumpled his napkin.

CHAPTER TWO

HARWELL didn't get back to his apartment on Park avenue until early in the morning—about that hour when the first milk wagons begin to rattle through the gray streets. The taxi driver who let him out smiled knowingly as he received his fare, and thanked Harwell for his generous tip. But he couldn't help but wonder why a gentleman who lived only a few blocks away from where he had picked him up should want to ride rather than walk.

Harwell let himself in. His valet was asleep, and there was no use disturbing him. He pulled down the shades to keep out the morning light, and crept into bed.

About three hours later his valet stepped softly into the room, coughed discreetly, and then woke him up.

"The telephone, sir," he said.

Harwell's reply is not exactly printable. "Why do you disturb me at this early hour?" he grumbled.

"This is very important, sir."

"Oh, well." He got out of bed, crawled into his dressing-gown, and answered the phone.

"This is Blaine, sir," said a voice over the wire. Blaine was Marston's butler.

"Yes."

"Can you come right over, sir?" the voice went on, shrill with excitement. "Mr. Marston's been murdered!"

"What?"

"Yes, sir!"

"I'll be there in ten minutes," said Harwell, hanging up the receiver and jerking off his dressing-gown.

Marston's home was only a few blocks away, on one of the side streets just off Fifth avenue. Blaine let Harwell in. He was a man about fifty, pale with fright and with trembling hands.

"Where are the police?" asked Harwell.

"I haven't called them, sir."

Harwell started. "Why not?"

"I didn't know what to do, sir. I thought I had better ask your advice first, being as you were so close to Mr. Marston."

"How did it happen?"

"I don't know, sir. I went into his bedroom to call him this morning. He usually has his bath at eight o'clock, sir, being a man of regular habits. The reading-lamp by his bedside was still burning, sir. If you will come upstairs? He has been dead, sir, I judge, some hours."

He led the way to the third floor. Marston was in bed, a silent figure, seemingly asleep. The book he had been reading had fallen from his hands, and lay upon the floor, open. There was a crimson stain on the white linen and his pajamas. Perhaps he had tried to reach for the telephone, for it, too, had fallen to the floor.

Harwell looked at his friend. His face grew sober. Death, coming so unexpectedly, always surprises and awes us with its mystery.

"I haven't touched a thing in the room," said Blaine.

"Wise of you."

"The first thing I did, sir, when I recovered myself, was to call you."

"We'd better have the police here," said Harwell. "Without a doubt it is murder Call them."

Blaine reached for the telephone on the floor.

"No, let that be. Use the one in the hall," exclaimed Harwell.

"I—I'd rather you would do it, sir," said Blaine. "I'm afraid, sir, it's been too much for me." He was losing control of himself again.

Harwell found the telephone in the hall and notified the police station of what had happened. Then he questioned Blaine:

"Did any one come last night?"

Blaine hesitated a moment. "No, sir."

"Did you hear a shot?"

"No, sir. You see, sir, my quarters are in the basement at the back of the house."

"Windows or anything open?"

"No, sir. At least not any that I have discovered as yet," The man's face was ashen in its pallor.

"Blaine," said Harwell, "there's something you are concealing from me."

"No, sir. Well, sir, you see, I wasn't in last night. The family being away, sir, there is so little for me to do, and Mr. Marston never needed me. He always dined out."

The police arrived in due order. A burly detective searched the room and the house for clues. The silver was intact, even the bills in Marston's pocket, and his watch was still there. Not a thing, so far as could be seen, had been touched.

"It's plain to me," said the detective in a pompous manner, "that robbery is not the motive of this crime."

Harwell assisted as far as possible, answering questions, giving the facts as he knew them concerning Marston's private life. He was still on hand at noon when Austen, Marston's attorney, arrived. He sent a cable to Mrs. Marston, at Austen's request, and helped with the arrangements for the funeral.

The detective had come to one conclusion: Marston had been shot by a party or parties unknown. That was all. There was nothing he could find that gave him a clue to the guilty person. The coroner's inquest would be held in the morning, and Harwell was told that he would be expected to be on hand.

Finding that he could do nothing more, he went back to his apartment. He was tired and worn, and soon fell into a troubled sleep.

CHAPTER THREE

WHEN he arrived at Marston's home the next morning a policeman let him in. Assembled in the library were Austen, one or two other witnesses, newspaper reporters, policemen, the detective, and the coroner, a sad-faced man with a funereal air.

The detective was the first to be called upon. He stated what he knew, facts with which Harwell was already familiar. The detective said, in conclusion, that he had not as yet come to any definite solution.

Then Harwell was called.

"You were a friend of Mr. Marston?" asked the coroner.

"Yes. One of his best. Mr. Austen will satisfy you on that point."

"We'll hear Mr. Austen later," said the coroner, irritated by the interruption. "You were the first to learn of this murder?"

"No. The second. Blaine, Mr. Marston's butler, was the first."

"How did you learn of it?"

"Blaine called me on the phone, asking me as Mr. Marston's friend to come over. I did."

"Yes. Go on."

Harwell told his story.

"If I am not mistaken," said the coroner, "you are the man who notified the police?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Blaine asked me to." Harwell was beginning to wonder what he was driving at.

"Why did he ask you?"

Harwell smiled wearily. "You'll have to ask Blaine that."

"Which we find impossible to do," said the coroner dramatically. "Blaine, the butler, cannot be found. He disappeared last night!"

There was a stir in the room.

"Then you must take my word for it," said Harwell, trying to appear calm.

"Mr. Harwell, I have one more question to ask you: Where were you last night?"

"I was——" Then he stopped short, remembering that he could not speak. If he did it would involve the honor of a woman, and that was against his code of ethics.

"I was with friends," he finished weakly.

"Their names?"

"I prefer not to say," he said abruptly.

"H'm," said the coroner. "H'm! Do you realize what you are doing?"

"No."

"You are incriminating yourself, Mr. Harwell."

Harwell shrugged his shoulders.

"When did you see Mr. Marston last?" asked the coroner.

"We had dinner together."

"Just you two?"

"No. A friend joined us—George Carson."

The coroner nodded as if satisfied.

"Bring Mr. Carson in," he said to a policeman. Harwell was amazed. He did not know that Carson was present. He wondered why he had been concealed in an adjoining room.

The coroner had the look of a man about to spring a surprise. Carson did not glance at Harwell as he came into the room and took the chair indicated. The coroner began questioning him about the previous evening. Carson admitted that he had had dinner with Marston and Harwell.

"Tell us," said the coroner, "what Mr. Harwell said at dinner."

Carson repeated the conversation. Every one in the room looked at Harwell. His face suddenly had gone white.

"I understand then," said the coroner, "that Mr. Harwell made the boast that he could murder Mr. Marston and get away with it?"

"Yes," answered Carson, his lips twitching.

"But you must realize——" put in Harwell.

"That will do," said the coroner. "You may tell your story to the jury at the trial. Mr. Harwell, consider yourself under arrest, charged with the murder of Allen J. Marston."

CHAPTER FOUR

IN vain did Harwell's attorney, H. Channing Woodford, try to get him released on bail. Considering the facts of the case, which seemed to prove that he had committed the murder in cold blood, the judge would not hear of it, even for such a prominent man as Harwell. All his attorney could do was to try to hasten the trial.

Harwell, of course, protested his innocence. But the newspapers played up the affair and seemed to delight in the fact that a society man and millionaire was in prison.

"Perhaps," said Woodford one morning, when he was interviewing him, "we can get you off on a plea of insanity."

"Nonsense, man," replied Harwell. "I refuse to listen to such an idea. I didn't kill Allen, and there's an end of it."

"But do you realize that a jury will convict you? You haven't a leg to stand on, unless you prove an alibi——"

"I refuse to tell where I was that evening," interrupted Harwell.

"Well, even that might not save you, I'm afraid. There was the time between your leaving and your arriving home that would have to be accounted for. I understand that the district attorney has managed to find the taxi driver who drove you home. He'll tell where he picked you up, which wasn't far from Marston's home."

Harwell was sober. "I grant you it does look bad for me," he said. "Has Blaine been found yet?"

"No. Not a trace of him. No one seems to have the faintest idea of what has happened to him. Of course that puts him in a bad light, unless some one has made away with him. Have you any enemies?"

"None that I know of."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Woodford, "I'll ask O'Conner to help us out on this, as a special favor to me."

O'Conner, as every one knows, is the most famous detective in America. So famous, in fact, that of late years he has been only in the employ of the United States Government.

When Woodford brought him around a few days later, he was not at all what Harwell had expected: a kindly, heavy-set man, rather simple in manners, in appearance more like the satisfied superintendent of a small-town Sunday-school than anything else. Yet there was a keenness in his eyes that made you feel the force that lay behind the man. Harwell told his story.

"Well, Mr. O'Conner," said Woodford, "what do you think?"

"I think it's all very simple. I come to conclusions quickly. But there are a number of links in the chain to be put together."

"You suspect?"

"No one. I want my proof first. Such things seem like a complicated maze, no way out. But, after all, criminals are stupid, and it's the detectives who are really clever. I say this with all modesty."

"You have every reason to be modest, Mr. O'Conner," said Harwell.

"If you'll give me time, and let me work in my own way, I'll go ahead."

They shook hands.

"I'll expect to hear from you soon," said Harwell.

"Possibly."

CHAPTER FIVE

IT was the last day of the trial. That afternoon the lawyers would begin to sum up the case. Harwell felt that he was already convicted. The circumstantial evidence had been too strong. Even his attorney had given up hope. The case seemed lost. Harwell was already convinced that the jury meant to return a verdict of guilty.

The weeks of worry and the strain he had been under had told upon him. He looked haggard and worn.

Blaine had not been found. Nor had O'Conner been heard from. He had not even been near Harwell since the day he had first met him.

Harwell looked at his watch. It was ten o'clock.

There was a stir in the crowded court-room—most of fashionable New York had attended the trial—as O'Conner made his appearance, followed by Blaine. The old man blinked with frightened eyes at the curious crowd who turned to look at him.

Harwell sat up. A glimmer of hope returned. Surely Blaine would corroborate his statement about having asked him to call the police, which the district attorney had not been inclined to believe.

O'Conner came forward. He held a moment's consultation with Woodford. The attorney turned to the judge.

"If you please, your honor, I have an important witness I wish to place on the stand."

There were no objections, and Blaine took the stand.

"Where have you been during the past few weeks?" asked Woodford.

Blaine responded in a voice so low that it could hardly be heard.

"In New Jersey, sir."

"Why in New Jersey?"

Blaine, under much questioning, managed to tell his story. His wife and family lived in New Jersey, so it seemed. He had been in the habit, during the absence of the Marston family, of spending his nights over there. His daughter had been seriously ill, and he had been nursing her. He explained to the satisfaction of every one the reason why he had been absent from the house on the night of the murder, returning early in the morning to find Mr. Marston dead.

The next evening he had gone to New Jersey as usual to sit by his daughter's bedside, but had been taken ill with pneumonia, due to his exposure and overdoing. When he had recovered sufficiently to read in the papers of Harwell's arrest and the suspicions that had been directed against himself because of his strange disappearance, he had been too frightened to make his whereabouts known. But O'Conner had found him, taking the easiest course and discovering from his references that he had a wife and family in Hoboken. It was so very simple that the burly detective who had been on hand the first morning after the murder was incensed to think he hadn't thought of that. In conclusion Blaine verified Harwell's story of having called the police at his request.

The district attorney cross-examined Blaine, hoping to catch him up on some point or other, but failed to do so.

O'Conner had been talking to Woodford, who now rose and again addressed Blaine.

"Just a moment," he said. "Before you go, I want you to tell the court what happened to you on the evening of September 17th last."

"I was walking through Central Park——" began Blaine.

"I object," put in the district attorney. "I cannot see what bearing this will have on the case."

"Your honor," said Woodford, "if you will

consent to listen you will discover that it has every bearing on the case."

The judge overruled the objection, and Blaine was allowed to continue. But before doing so O'Conner passed a penciled note to the judge, who ordered that the doors of the court-room be closed and no one allowed to leave. No one seemed to want to, for that matter.

"Seated on a bench, sir, was a man, rather well-dressed, but evidently ill, sir. He was talking to himself in a wild manner, and my sympathies were aroused. I asked him if I could do anything for him. He looked like a gentleman, sir. At first he was not inclined to be friendly, but when I told him who I was and offered to make him a cup of coffee if he so desired it, he allowed me to assist him to the house. The family were away, sir, or I wouldn't have dreamed of taking such a liberty. We went in through the servant's entrance, however. I strongly suspected at first that he was under the influence of liquor; and I will be honest, sir, I was rather hopeful of being rewarded in a small way. I usually am, sir, when I give assistance to a gentleman who has had a wee bit too much to drink. I wasn't able to get rid of him, sir. He didn't seem to understand me when I suggested I call a taxi. So it ended by my giving him shelter for the night. In the morning we had breakfast together. He was bright and chippy, sir, and then it was I began to be suspicious of his having been drunk. I judged that he had been using some sort of—well, some sort of dope, sir."

The court-room was still.

"Go on," said Woodford.

"After a while he went away, sir, quite bright—just as bright as either you or I, sir." The judge stroked his chin, but no one laughed. "I thought nothing more of it, sir. It was a service I was only too glad to render a gentleman. But later in the day I discovered that my keys were missing. At the time, sir, I did not connect the fact, and it was only when Mr. O'Conner pointed out to me——"

"That will do," now interrupted Woodford.

O'Conner was next requested to take the stand.

He told briefly and clearly how he had discovered Blaine, and how he had questioned him until he had told the story he had just repeated to the court.

"The man whom Blaine befriended," said O'Conner, "is the man who committed the murder!"

"I object," began the district attorney, but the judge silenced him. O'Conner's reputation was too great for him to be treated as an ordinary witness.

"The man who committed the murder," went on O'Conner, "had been planning and waiting for the right moment. He is, as Mr. Blaine has hinted, an addict to drugs. And, as you know"—O'Conner was more like a person instructing the court than a man giving evidence—"such a person becomes cunning and crafty. For years he has borne against Mr. Marston a deep-seated grudge. I doubt if even Mr. Marston was aware of this. On the night of the murder he entered the house by the servants' entrance, found his way upstairs, and shot Mr. Marston. Then he left the house without leaving a clue behind him. Your honor, the man who killed Mr. Marston is seated there!"

He pointed in Harwell's direction. Not at him, but beyond him to a man who turned a sickly pallor.

"I accuse George Carson of committing the murder!"

CHAPTER SIX

A FEW days later, after Harwell had been released, following Carson's complete confession, he asked O'Conner about his discovery.

"I didn't know exactly," said O'Conner. "But when you told me that you and Mr. Marston had been instrumental in blackballing him at the Aztec Club because he was a dope fiend, and how you had warned his fiancée, and that she had broken off the engagement in consequence, I suspected that if any one wanted both of you out of the way it would be Carson. You knew his secret, you see. And we detectives often go by hunches. This was one. I merely took a chance, especially after

what Blaine told me. I'm something of a mathematician, and always consider that two and two make four."

"You mean to say that you accused him openly on nothing more than your suspicions?" asked Harwell in amazement.

"Yes."

"By George, you're clever. Far more so than any criminal that ever lived."

"I'm glad to hear you say so," said O'Conner. "I feel that I've vindicated my calling once again!"

But he did not tell Harwell that he had found in Carson's apartment, after a search unknown to Carson, the key that fitted the door of the servant's entrance to Marston's home, which Carson had foolishly neglected to throw away.

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THREE DAYS ON MONT BLANC

THE scientific world will be interested in the details of the perilous undertaking of M. Vallot and M. F. M. Richard, two Frenchmen, who have pitched their tents on the fearful heights in order to make scientific experiments on Mont Blanc. M. Vallot is one of the best known members of the French Alpine Club, whose observations on the Pyrenese glaciers and on certain Alpine peaks have been of great value. For the purpose of making further observations he attempted to erect three temporary meterological stations on Mont Blanc, the first of which was situated at Chamounix, the second at Rochers des Grands Mulets, the third on the top of the mountain.

M. Richard, who accompanied him, is a constructor of scientific instruments. Twenty-four guides had been retained to carry the necessary luggage, of which no man is able to carry more than twenty pounds. Early as five o'clock the expedition started out, but owing to difficulties about the luggage they did not arrive at Grands Mulets till ten o'clock at night, which, as a rule, is reached early in the afternoon. No special incident marked the first day's journey, and at eleven o'clock all lay asleep in the little hut which serves as shelter to mountain climbers. At 3 a. m. the caravan started once more, this time on the most difficult part of the road. The ascent was made very gradually and carefully. One guide became indisposed and both MM. Vallot and Richard were suffering from an attack of mountain sickness. When they reached the summit at last, at 2:50 p. m., both travelers sat down on the snow, utterly worn out. The guides threw down their burdens, and began to descend at once, and only two of the number remained with the scientists.

They pitched the tent, lighted the petroleum lamp and prepared the dinner, after which M. Vallot, who had regained his strength, went out and placed his apparatus on the plateau in the biting cold. At 4 a. m. the energetic Frenchman was about again, calling his companions to view the sunrise. M. Richard, however, as well as the two guides looked at the magnificent spectacle with mixed feelings, their state of health and comfort being by no means perfect. After all the instruments were placed and several observations taken, a visitor, an Englishman, appeared on the peak, and speedily turned back Chamounixward. The second night was passed more comfortably in heavy coats, linen masks and fur-lined snow boots, the temperature still remaining extremely low. The following day was spent in experimenting, but so great became the weariness and weakness of the whole party that they could only swallow a few spoonfuls of coffee or soup.

At 6 next morning another Englishman arrived with letters from Chamounix. At 2 p. m. a terrible storm broke out over the peak, threatening every moment to carry away the tent. M. Vallot, on leaving the tent, noticed a curious phenomenon around him; he was in the midst of electric clouds, and all his clothes trembled with electricity. When the third day began to dawn the sky became clear; the last experiments were made and the descent began, proving after the storm, which had effaced all traces of a path, far more formidable than the ascent.

The Room Without Windows

By LAURA REID MONTGOMERY

CHAPTER ONE

JIM DENTON went slowly down the steps of the clubhouse. He had spent a dull evening and was tired out:

"Wonder why I didn't go home hours ago," he reflected.

He was a private detective and had been very busy cleaning up a gang of bootleggers infesting Chicago.

He stepped into his car, which stood waiting at the curb, but as he was about to start it a soft sigh came to his ears. He looked out and about. It was in Chicago. Sheridan Road was deserted; the twin rows of street lights showed him that there was no one near unless they were concealed in the shrubbery of the grounds to the right. There the house stood, far back from the street, but he could not have heard the sound so far.

He felt unaccountably disturbed; perhaps it was because of the late hour, for it was twenty minutes past three, but to him there was something sinister in the sound. He stood looking up at the club-house steps, when a second sigh, very near, made him start. A blur of white in the interior of his car attracted his eye, and stepping in, he saw a heap of white. It was a girl he found as he switched on the lights, young and wearing a lace negligee and, strangest of all, soundly asleep. The bright light on her face did not awaken her, but her extraordinarily long lashes lifted a bit, then rested quiescent on her white cheeks. Jim stood leaning with his back against the front seat. Who was she and why had she climbed into his car in such an unconventional gown. The summer breeze stirred the cobwebby laces and fluttered the ends of the blue satin ribbons that both trimmed and fastened her frock. One small foot was doubled under her on the seat, and the other dangled childishly beside him. She wore white silk stockings and blue satin mules with high gilded heels. He stared at her in growing dismay, yet with an odd glow at his eyes. There was something in her very helpnessness that made Denton long to take care of her. An approaching step made him look up nervously. How could he account for her presence? A policeman came under the street light, and Jim made another discovery. The foot dangling near him had a splash of blood upon the white stocking. With a sudden impulse he turned off the inside lights and, getting in the front seat, started his machine just as the officer came near him.

He lived north, but the machine being headed south, he continued in that direction. The policeman looked curiously after the big gray car, then he got a sudden jar.

"Say, boss, did you-all see a gal come runnin' down heah?"

The man in uniform wheeled sharply. He had heard no footsteps, although the street was curiously still for a city, even at that hour. Back of the handsome house the soft lap of the waves in Lake Michigan were distinguishable.

"Running from where?" growled the cop.

"Ah thought I seed a gal, but——" The colored man rubbed his eyes sleepily and slouched away around the corner.

"Dopy," decided Officer Casey indifferently.

Meanwhile Jim sped down Lake Shore Drive and across boulevard link. As he passed the silent library he heard a stir from the back seat, but he stepped on the gas and speeded past another officer who was ringing up at his patrol box.

He had no definite idea as he drove on into the night; the one predominating thought was to protect the helpless creature curled on the cushions behind in her mystifying sleep.

Going south a small car passed him and

then, slowing up, permitted him to pass. Twice Denton looked out and saw the car keeping about fifty paces behind. Sure that he was being followed, Jim waited until he knew where two roads met. Going at a moderate pace until near the fork, he gradually slowed up and shut off both the tail lights and the front ones; then with a sudden burst of speed took the road to the left, and ran down from the road at the side. The big car made no noise; the smaller one dashed past on the same road, leaving Jim chuckling at his strategy. He waited in the darkness, and presently the green tail light that had been fading was replaced by two whites ones as the car returned, flying towards the fork of the road. When the chugging little machine had vanished noisily around the bend Denton, with some difficulty, got his car into the main road and resumed his trip.

He speeded for about fifteen minutes, when he saw lights ahead, and steered the car up a bumpy road leading to a cottage. There were voices from the main road, and he switched off his lights as he waited amongst the trees.

"I am cold," said a childish voice from the back seat, startling him as he sat wondering what his next move would be.

Picking up his coat, the detective got out and placed it over her. She was trembling with cold, but had again fallen asleep. Taking his electric flashlight, he approached the cottage, which seemed to be deserted.

The sagging door was not fastened, and he entered to find a room dusty and clouded with cobwebs that floated down, touching his face with ghostly filaments. There was a rusty old cook stove and some broken-down furniture. After going through the rest of the small place and satisfying himself that the house was as deserted as it looked, he smoothed the bedclothes, brought in an auto robe from the car and put that on top. Then he lifted the slight form of the sleeping girl and put her on the bed, which he drew nearer the stove. The woodbox had some sticks and bits of coal, and he soon had a fire started.

As the heat began to rise from the fire the cobwebs stirred, and the floating ends, seen in the mingled fire-light and the moonshine that filtered in from the dirty window panes, assumed sinister shapes. Denton sat smoking a cigarette and watching the white face of the sleeper. "Wonder what the next move is? I believe she's doped the way she sleeps. Wonder if I'd dare leave her here and go back to town for some food and a doctor. If I'd had the sense of a ninny I'd have driven straight to a hospital and let them do the worrying, but that colored man was certainly on her track and——" Even to himself the man hated to acknowledge the hold the small sleeper had already gained upon his heart. The small, oval face without the slightest touch of color, save in the rose of her quaintly cut mouth and the dusky lashes, held an intangible attraction for him. The very helplessness of the tiny figure with the inadequate coverings of lace and satin ribbons, the absurd satin slippers with tall gilded heels, all these appealed to his strength. He could not turn her over to the law, no matter what she had done. The sudden flaring up of a bit of kindling showed the sinister patch of dried blood on her white stocking, and the man's black brows drew together sharply. Innocent girls did not run about at night with bloodstains; did not have strange negroes trailing them——

Her voice broke in upon his reflections:

"I could kill you with——". The high, strained tones from the bed shrilled through the room, then all was silent again.

Jim savagely stamped out the end of his cigaarette and threw it into the stove. She was condemning herself in her delirium. How could he go and leave her to the mercy of passers-by even to get food for her?

At last he rose and hunted about until he found a piece of cardboard amongst the odds and ends on the table by the window. He scrawled some letters on it by the light of his flashlight and, after turning the dampers on the stove, hurried out.

The faint gray of dawn was fast giving place to broad daylight. Denton glanced sharply about as he turned into the main road, but he saw no one. When he entered the loop he stopped in at a café to get some coffee, and bought a paper from a newsboy.

The cup of coffee stood steaming before him presently, but he forgot to drink it. He was staring at the bold-faced type that headed a murder case of the preceding night.

"A young wife tired of her husband's

amours stabs him. The police promised some interesting details. Wealthy family try to conceal names, but Detective Woods has already secured photographs and interviews that he refuses to suppress. For once the whole truth will be made public."

And so the paper rambled on, trying to augment the meager facts with elusive nothings. The address was just two doors from the clubhouse where Denton had found the strange girl. No wonder there had been a spot of blood upon her stocking. She had worn no rings, but many married women did not wear wedding rings, so that meant nothing. The detective looked down at his coffee distastefully. He had not thought she was married, and somehow that fact hurt him worse than the knowledge of her crime, for he had no doubt in his mind about her connection with the murder. Her words spoken in delirium had made that apparent.

While he sat thinking in the café the city was stirring into the day's business. Out south in the little cottage the same colored man who had accosted the policeman was standing at the bedside looking down at the sleeping girl.

CHAPTER TWO

JIM went to a physician who was a friend and told him the story.

"Notify the police by telephone where they can find the girl, and keep your name out of it," was the doctor's comment.

"Yes, of course, that's the proper thing to do, but I'm not going to do it. Will you go out with me and get her? May I bring her here," asked Denton.

"A murderess?"

"That's problematical; let's call her a patient. That must appeal to you professionally."

The doctor, interested, had been looking over his little black bag, and now added some articles and snapped it shut.

"All right; got your car down there?"

Doctor Fleming was thirty-two years old, rich and of some note in his profession. The two young men had been friends at college and understood each other perfectly. Denton, a few years younger, was of a hot-headed nature that frequently got him into scrapes that the older man helped him out of. When Jim had been a freshman and had put a snake in the music master's piano, Doctor Fleming had pulled the strings that prevented his expulsion.

"I suppose," said Fleming, glancing at the driver, "that she is a blonde?"

The detective smiled.

"I would do as much for any woman, but, as it happens, she *is* blonde at least. I haven't seen her eyes, but her hair is a goldy yellow, and her lashes are a bright brown with odd golden tips. Her skin is the most delicate I've ever seen, a lovely frail-looking white, and yet with a pinkiness running under it that makes it look healthy and dainty."

"You seem to have fallen in love with her."

"Yes," admitted the detective, "I have."

As they talked they were going a good forty-five miles through the unfrequented road, and presently turned in on the weed-grown roadway of the cottage.

"Small-pox," ejaculated the physician, eyeing a sign on the door.

"I forgot to tell you." Jim drew up skilfully at the side of the shack. "I made that sign to keep people away. Any busybody who happened to see me drive up would think twice before going inside."

Denton pushed open the sagging door; the heat from the fire still hung heavily on the air, the cobwebs that floated down were laden with dust. A long shaft of yellow sunlight rested on the bed. But it was empty.

A search through the cottage was fruitless.

"I suppose," the doctor regarded his friend with quizzical eyes, "you did not dream it all?"

The officer walked over to the bed and stood looking down. There was a faint impress on the faded mattress where she had lain. He could again see the childish figure with the laces and ribbons tumbled about her satiny neck. Why had he ever gone and left her at the mercy of a chance passer-by? Then his throat contracted. It had not been chance that had brought the kidnapper so speedily; some one had been watching and had seen him go. Drearily he picked a tiny blue-ribbon bow that lay on the rough board floor.

"This does not look as though it belonged

to a house of this kind, does it?" he said at last.

"You are well out of it. Jim, women who stab their husbands are not the best kind of playmates for detectives."

"You are under arrest!"

A strange voice came from the doorway, and Jim stepped forward, to find himself looking at a revolver.

"What's the big idea?" he asked, startled.

"For kidnapping," was the curt answer. It was Woods, the Central office detective, and he motioned towards a colored man, who stood behind him.

"All right," returned Jim. "I'll come without kicking, but you'll have some trouble proving such a case. Whom did I steal?"

The cold gray eyes of the Central office detective met his icily, while the darky suggestively held open the door, and Jim and his friend walked out toward the machines. The doctor headed Jim's car homeward, and the arrested detective entered the small car that had trailed him during the night.

For reasons of his own Jim did not care to disclose his identity.

"And now," remarked Woods, "if you want to tell me the truth I may help you out. Murder is a serious thing, and even accomplices don't get off too easily, young fellow."

"Nothing doing," returned Jim, grinning; "find out what you can, and we'll see how long you can detain me. A few minutes at the most, I'll say."

The jaws of Woods clapped together like a steel trap, and the conversation ended.

Denton took out a five-dollar bill, and when Woods turned his head, Jim held it towards the negro.

"Where is the girl?" he whispered.

The dark hand twitched involuntarily towards the money, then he shook his woolly head sternly.

Woods laughed grimly.

"Nothing doing," he murmured.

Jim's car, guided by the doctor, sped on ahead, and the young man watched it moodily. He had mixed himself up with a murder case, lost a night's sleep, and now faced a cell. Doctor Fleming sat hunched over in the driver's seat, apparently paying no heed to him. Suddenly there came a report of bursting tires, and the small car came to a sudden halt. Jim jumped out with his companions to see what had caused the trouble, and with a quick grasping of his luck ran towards his own car, which had stopped just ahead. As Jim climbed in the doctor stepped on the gas, and the detective, looking after them balefully, saw only a dusty streak as the car sped down the road.

CHAPTER THREE

"TALK about luck," shouted Jim as the car bumped over the rough road. "That guy don't know I'm a bull, and as I'm out to protect that girl, I don't want him to know it."

Fleming laughed grimly.

"Not much luck about a box of tacks," he muttered, steering skilfully past a huckster's wagon; then he turned a corner sharply. "I'm going to head south again on this road." He glanced in all directions and darted up another street.

An hour later they got out of the car before the doctor's house.

"Better get out of town for a few days," advised Fleming.

The detective gripped his friend's hand.

"Good advice, but I guess you know I can't follow it. I'm crazy about that girl. It's the real thing this time, and I'm determined to get her out of her trouble."

Fleming nodded.

"Count on me. Anything you want done telephone, but look out for that Central office detective; he'll be sore."

Jim released the lever and started towards the garage to store the car, to avoid identification by Woods. As he came out on foot he glanced idly into a passing taxi, and then started after it on a run. Looking out indifferently at the passers-by was the girl, or her double, whom he had left sleeping in the shack.

An empty taxi snailing along was stopped, and Denton ordered the driver to trail the yellow bus.

"Keep right behind it, and when they stop you stop," he directed.

This time the trail was north. As they

passed the clubhouse on Sheridan Drive Jim leaned forward and looked out. Three doors from the club he saw a crowd of people looking curiously up at a gray stone house that had a streamer of crape on the door-bell. The yellow cab dashed around the corner and drew up at a flat building in the next street.

Denton tossed a bill to his driver and told him to wait, then followed the fur-wrapped figure of the unknown.

"It must be her furs that make her look somewhat different," he thought as he neared the small figure.

When the lower door was released in response to her ring, Denton edged in behind her.

"Pardon me," he began as she ascended the stairs.

She turned instantly and faced him. Her lips trembled, but she pressed them together firmly.

"Yes?"

The low, controlled voice struck him oddly; it had not the timbre he had expected.

"May I come in with you? The detective may be after us at any minute."

She looked at him steadily, then with a gesture of acquiescence continued her way. The third-floor apartment on the right was where she stopped, and the door stood open, but there was no one in sight.

"Well?" She had closed and double-locked the front door, and now faced him in the living-room.

There was a hardness in the blonde face that had not been apparent in the face of the sleeping girl. The long brown eyes gazed back at him questioningly and with not a trace of fear.

"Don't you remember anything about last night?" began the detective, and seeing no reply in her expression, he continued: "I found you in my car, and fearing you would be exposed to adverse comment on account of"—he stopped, but she waved her hand impatiently—"your—er—dress, so I——"

There was a subtle change in the charming face.

"Sit down," she interrupted, "and let's get this thing clear. Start right at the beginning."

He took the chair she waved towards and stared at her. The helplessness of the unconscious girl had vanished; a well-poised woman regarded him from cool, rather insolent eyes.

"As I said, I found you in the back seat of my car fast asleep," he explained. "As I stood staring at you I noticed a colored man step out in the path of light thrown by a street light. At the same instant an officer swung into view, and without stopping to think"—Jim stopped, flushing; now in the garish light of the chill winter's day this escapade of the night sounded childish; had it not been for the seriousness of the situation he would have sworn that she was enjoying his confusion—"I stepped on the gas and hastily drove off with you."

"Yes, and then?" she urged impatiently.

"We were followed, and thinking I had thrown them off the track, I finally took you into a deserted shack, and after making a fire to warm you I went off for a doctor. You see, you slept so steadily that I feared you were drugged. When I got back with Doctor Fleming you were gone, and while we stood staring at the empty bed a Central office detective and a colored man came in and arrested me for abduction."

The pretty grave lips were stirred by a faint smile, more the shadow of amusement than a real smile.

"But you are here?"

"Yes, I escaped. But we'd better not waste any more time talking. Woods thinks you are safely in custody, and we had better see where we can hide you. He's back on the road out south with flat tires, but he has probably gotten another machine by now and will be on our track pretty soon."

"Did he say I was in jail?"

Jim had not mentioned "jail," and the plump phrasing of the question brought an icy sensation to the region of his heart.

"He wouldn't tell me anything; but he implied that you were in custody."

She nodded.

"Now what can I do to help you? I saw the morning papers, and murder is a serious charge."

A shudder stirred the rich furs, and her long brown eyes were filled with a brooding terror. Struck by the fear in her face and the direction of her glance towards the stately house around the corner, the detective had an inward

vision of the slain husband lying cold and accusing in his home.

"I shall plead guilty, although there were no witnesses; at least——" she stopped abruptly—"my lawyer has the facts, and he advised that I remain hidden for a time, but that man Woods is determined to become famous by his detective work on this case. I suppose I should overwhelm you with thanks for your unlimited kindness"—Jim was struck afresh by the oddness of her manner—"but just now I must plan."

She pressed her hand against her head, and he caught the sparkle of her rings; there was a splendid half-hoop of diamonds, and the platinum wedding ring was thickly set with the same jewels.

"I have a cousin living in Evanston; I had thought of taking you there this morning. Suppose you put on some kind of disguise and go there?" suggested Denton, who knew how easily she might be arrested if she remained in the city.

She made a brief, fatalistic gesture. "This is Chicago; I can't go running about in ridiculous disguises. That Detective Woods would find me, no matter where I was hidden. I got away this morning."

Jim, looking over the velvet hat of his hostess, saw a thin, worried face looking in through the partly open curtains that hung before the living-room door.

"Will you——" began the newcomer.

"All right, Sally, I'll be there in a moment," interrupted Mrs. Tremaine, for such was her name, and the woman vanished.

"I cannot bear to go far from here." Mrs. Tremaine looked intently into space, and any faint hopes that Denton had tried to entertain as to her possible innocence were pushed back into a cold conviction of guilt. He remembered that murderers were invariably attracted to the scene of the crime. "Somehow I feel that I must be near until——" A shudder finished her speech, and Jim remembered the bit of crape floating in the morning breeze; he recalled also, with an icy sensation along his spine, the blood spot on the stocking. All the tenderness that had filled his being when he had had the sleeping girl in his care seemed to have vanished before the cold realities of the day.

"Women who stab their husbands are not the best kind of playmates." Again Doctor Fleming's words rang in his memory.

"I think I will go over to my house. Will you come with me?" The words seemed to be wrung from her uncontrollably; her small hands were clenched together as though to still her emotion.

"I would strongly advise you to keep away. Why, Woods may be there waiting for you! I'm sure your lawyer would not permit——"

Her eyes flashed stormily.

"Permit! I do as I choose. If you are afraid?"

The taunting accent stung him. He had just escaped from an embarrassing arrest on her account, and she regarded him doubtfully, considered him lacking in courage.

"Shall we start?" He got to his feet, wondering what lay in store for them.

She pulled her fur cloak about her figure and picked up her gloves.

"Sally!" The woman instantly appeared through the secret corridor.

The worried face of the maid assumed a chalky hue.

"It isn't safe, ma'am. That detective man will——"

Mrs. Tremaine held up her jeweled hand, and the words ceased.

Denton followed the two women downstairs, wondering if the meddlesome fool Woods would pop out with his dárky satellite. Instead of going out the street door, however, they went into the basement. Sally carried an electric flashlight, and by the rays of this they picked their way through the damp basement, past piles of coal and the flaring blaze of the furnace, under dripping pipes that were strung along the low ceilings, and presently they came to a stop before a wall. Sally looked questioningly towards Mrs. Tremaine, who nodded shortly. The maid put out the light, and a minute later pressed a button. To Jim's amazement there was a small aperture in the rough wall where before had been only blankness. He squeezed through after the two women, and again the light was extinguished as the door slid into place.

"Better let him see the catch; we may come back in a hurry," remarked Mrs. Tremaine, and with an unwilling air the servant held the

torch up to a button that was concealed under a bit of knotted rope. Then, holding her hand to shield the light from other parts of the basement, Sally led them on. Presently she stopped before another seemingly blank wall, and this time the detective saw her reach up and pull on a rusty nail. Without a sound a portion of the boards slid upwards like a screen, disclosing a narrow stairway. At the top of this Sally produced a small key, and after listening a moment put it in the keyhole. Mrs. Tremaine motioned Jim back, and they waited while the servant entered the room alone.

(To be continued in the next number.)

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CHRISTMAS ISLAND

CHRISTMAS ISLAND, in the Indian Ocean, one of the several bits of land that lonely voyagers have come upon in the holiday season and have named accordingly, may play an important part in the further checking up of the Einstein theory, according to press reports from London. The Royal Observatory at Greenwich planned to send to the tiny island shortly after the first of the year an expedition equipped with good-sized telescopes to observe next September's total eclipse of the sun. A Dutch astronomical party may also install its instruments there.

The island is the subject of the following bulletin from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic Society:

"Christmas Island has been described as at once one of the loneliest and loveliest spots in the world. And its possession of tree-climbing crabs and a superscented tree gives it a right to be classed as one of the queerest.

Java, its nearest neighbor to the north, is 250 miles away; the little Cocos Islands lie more than 600 miles to the west, Australia is 1,000 miles to the southwestward, while to the south the waters of the Indian Ocean are unbroken by even the smallest islands until the lands around the South Pole are reached at a distance of nearly 4,000 miles. The island, 12 miles long by 9 miles broad, is in reality made up of the slopes and top of a huge mountain peak. Soundings show that if the waters of the ocean were drained away a rough pyramid 15,000 feet high would stand alone in a plain, the present island forming the last 1,000 feet of its slopes.

"The island is believed to be unique in that it is probably the only tropical island capable of sustaining a considerable population which had never been peopled until after its discovery by Europeans. Except where sheer rock walls occur, it is heavily wooded from the water's edge to the summit.

"But one pestiferous creature is omnipresent—a wicked looking red crab. Some of these creatures attain a size of 9 inches across the back. They do not confine themselves to the shore sands, but range all over the island, and always in groups. Sometimes armies of them march along. They even climb the trees and feast on the succulent nipa palms. As an offset to the crabs, the island, unlike practically every other tropical land, is mosquitoless.

"For one of its features Christmas Island may be said to be infamous, rather than famous. It is a tree, believed not to exist elsewhere, which is described by one disgusted visitor to the island as emitting 'the most disagreeable odor in the world.' With a trunk as sturdy as an oak and leaves as graceful as those of an aspen, it gives to the eye no idea of its true character. But its scent permeates the air for hundreds of feet in every direction, and if one is unfortunate enough to so much as touch its bark or leaves nothing short of repeated scrubbings with strong carbolic soap will make him again fit for human society.

"Rich deposits of sulphate of lime occur on Christmas Island, a fact to which it owes such importance as it possesses in non-eclipse years. A phospate company regularly takes shiploads of the mineral from the island to Singapore, where it is marketed as fertilizer."

Find Ancient Race In Arizona

EXPLORATIONS made by the Peabody Museum of Harvard in the Marsh Pass region of Northeastern Arizona have resulted in the discovery of the remains of an ancient people who once inhabited that section and were intermediate in development between the basket makers, the earliest race known to have lived in that region, and the Pueblo cliff dwellers, whose remarkable stone villages along the Arizona cliffs have attracted widespread interest.

The Harvard expeditions to this semi-desert region, over 100 miles from the nearest railroad, were begun in 1914 by A. V. Kidder and Samuel J. Guernsey of the Peabody Museum staff, and were later continued under the sole direction of Mr. Guernsey. Prior to 1914 commercial collectors had found traces of the basket makers, but facts about these earliest people of the region had never been secured by trained archeologists until the Harvard expeditions began. These expeditions have not only contributed a mass of information concerning the basket makers, but now show the existence of a people who followed the basket makers in point of time but preceded the cliff dwellers.

The post-basket makers, as these newly discovered people are called, resembled the basket makers in many particulars, but were clearly in a later stage of development. The basket makers had no permanent dwellings, whereas these later people had stone houses in caves and in the open. They also had pottery, crude in some respects, but with the beginnings of decoration, and some of it was fired. This is the earliest pottery known to have been made in the Southwest.

Instead of burying their dead in caves, as did the basket makers, they seem to have lived in the caves and to have conducted their burials in the open. Their more settled life is attributed to their success in agriculture, in which they were evidently proficient. They grew corn mostly.

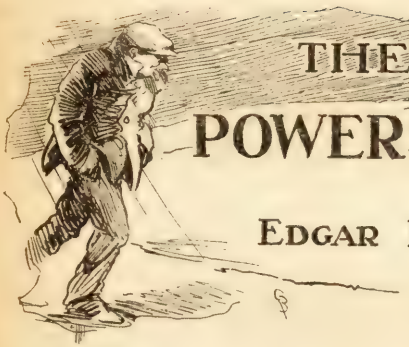
Skeletons found in the course of the excavations indicate that both the basket makers and these successors had rather long skulls, whereas the cliff-dwellers who followed them were a round-headed race and always had the back of the skull artificially flattened by the hard board headrests of the cradles in which the babies were placed.

The relationship of these various primitive peoples is still a matter of doubt. It is believed that the post-basket makers discovered during the Harvard explorations probably were descendants of the basket makers, but whether they in turn were ancestors of the cliff-dwellers is not certain. It seems doubtful, on account of the marked difference in the shape of the head, even aside from artificial flattening.

The basket makers had dogs. The mummified remains of two were found during the Harvard explorations and are now on exhibition at the Peabody Museum, along with a quantity of other objects illustrative of basket-maker life. One was a long-haired animal about the size of a small collie, the other a smaller black and white dog resembling somewhat a terrier, with a short shaggy coat, erect ears, and a long full-haired tail. These were clearly genuine dogs, and not bred from coyotes or other wild animals of the region which they inhabited.

Many of the objects found in the dry caves of this region are in an extraordinary state of preservation on account of the dryness of the climate, despite their great age.

How many thousand years ago these primitive people lived in Northeastern Arizona is unknown, or how they were related to the Indians of the present day. The scientific study of the region is said to be still in its early stages, and later explorations will doubtless throw more light on the early history of the primitive peoples which inhabited the numerous caves of the Southwestern part of our country.



THE POWERS THAT PREY

BY

EDGAR DANIEL KRAMER

TO Curly Bird, as he trudged through the early November dusk, it meant nothing at all that the mills of the gods are eternally grinding and turning out a grist that is exceedingly fine. In his heart he was cursing the upstate constable whose vigilance had caused him to be something over a month behind schedule in his migration southward. He was cold; he was hungry, and to top it all he was broke. A hunched-up, shuffling figure, his coat collar up, his hands thrust deep into his trousers pockets, his scrubby-bearded face set in an ugly scowl, his eyelids stiff with frost, he shuffled along, a grotesque thing in the snow flurries. Contrary to his wont, Curly Bird was not whistling.

"Huh!" he was grumbling throatily. "Wot wid constables, an' railroad dicks, an' bills, an' such, we 'bos are up agin it good an' proper. Not a chance in th' world! Not even a lookin! Huh!"

The road led the wanderer around the foot of a high hill, at the top of which a great mass of buildings, with lights gleaming brightly here and there, bulked huge against the sky in the twilight.

"Gee! Th' big stir!" Curly muttered, as he halted, knocking his heels together and staring at the massive pile. "Them guys up there in th' cells is warm anyways. Dat's somethin' on a night like dis. Lucky stiffs, I'd say!"

The tramp skirted the hill and hurried forward to the railroad station, whose lights and promised warmth seemed to beckon him. Trains flashed by in both directions and in rapid succession, like the comets of the night, the glow of their fire-boxes rosy against the sky.

Carter, whilom inspector of police in the metropolis not so many miles away, sat on his bunk in the deathhouse chatting with his guard.

"Six o'clock," the guard mumbled.

"That's nothing to me!" Carter laughed.

"You're due to go at seven."

"That's a joke," Carter answered. "You're all wrong, son. I'm never going through the little green door at the end of the corridor."

"You got less'n an hour now."

"Nix on that!" Carter chuckled. "You have another guess. I'll be out of here and as free as the winds before the clock strikes seven bells. That's gospel."

"You sure have your nerve all right, all right."

"Why not?" Carter returned. "I'm playing a sure thing. My release will be here any minute now."

"Maybe you've got th' right dope," the guard replied, "but just th' same I wouldn't want to be in your shoes. Th' time's gettin' short, an' there's many a slip, you know."

"Slip?" Carter snorted. "Slip! Not this time, son. Give me a smoke."

Carter was right; he knew whereof he spoke. While Curly Bird was wearily plodding toward the haven of the railroad station, while Carter was lighting his cigarette with fingers so steady that the guard marveled, the Metropolitan Express was speeding southward along the river bearing that which meant life and liberty to the condemned man.

The Carter case had rocked the state from end to end. Carter, as inspector of police, had leagued himself with the powers of the underworld, and under his protection crime ran rampant, vice flourished like a green bay tree. Intoxicated by their success, rendered arrogant and overbold, Carter and his crowd eventually went a bit too far. One of the gamblers, weary of being mercilessly bled, made his way to the commissioner. The result was a grand-jury investigation. Carter was arrested, and Rosen, the gambler, turned state's evidence, promising to tell all he knew.

The following night in the blinding glare of the arc-lights, while the pavements were crowded with pedestrians on their way to the atre, a gray touring car drew up to the entrance of the all-night café from which Rosen was emerging, joking and laughing with some friends. Three shots rang out sharply, so close together that they almost blended into one. Little wisps of smoke lifted from the gray car as it nosed out into the traffic and was gone. Women screamed. Rosen stiffened spasmodically, and a startled expression settled slowly upon his round, fat face.

"Carter!" he gasped, clutching at his chest. "This is his—doings. I told you—they'd get me—to shut me up. I—know—too—much—for——"

Then he collapsed.

After trailing them across the continent and back the gunmen were finally apprehended. In their trials it was brought out that they were acting under orders from Carter, who, in spite of almost herculean efforts to thwart the ends of justice, was at last convicted and sentenced to the chair, following one of the most sensational and most spectacular trials in the history of criminal annals.

"You'll never put this across," Carter boasted to the detectives who led him from the court-room. "You might just as well let me go now. All this is just so much wasted time and energy," he went on wearily. "I'll find a way to beat you yet. You folks just can't snuff me out. The sooner you realize that the better for all concerned."

The powers that prey left no stone unturned to save Carter. They employed the best legal talent and exhausted every legal means to ward off the doom that hung over him. Every move, however, was futile.

"Th' law's so much bunk, Carter," Brook, a notorious underworld leader, was explaining to Carter just a week previous to the day set for the execution. "There ain't a loop-hole that we haven't tried. It's been nothin' doin'."

"You mean there's no way to get me out of this?" Carter demanded, his voice suddenly lifeless.

"Nothin' o' th' kind!" Brook snarled, rising to his full six feet, his jowled face red with rage and his pig-like eyes flashing. "We all owe you more'n a lot fer keepin' your mouth shut at th' trial. You coulda squealed an' spilled th' beans fer fair. You didn't. We're gonna stand by you. To hell with th' law anyway. I'm gonna see you outa this hole, Carter. Buck up an' don't get down in th' mouth. Expect things to happen on th' last day, maybe in th' last hour. This'll be surprise stuff, ol' man, but I'm tellin' you it's th' only way."

"There'll be no slip?" Carter questioned.

"Nary a slip!" Brook answered. "From now on I'm swingin' this proposition myself—in person. See?"

The governor stared at the bit of pasteboard which young Lytton, his secretary, placed in his hand, and his eyebrows lifted quizzically.

"All right, Lytton," he spoke wearily. "I'll see him."

Lytton went to the door, beckoned, and Brook entered ponderously.

"Mornin', governor," he began.

"Good-morning," the governor replied, swinging around and indicating a chair.

"Like to talk to you alone," Brook rumbled, still standing and eyeing the secretary.

The governor nodded and Lytton withdrew.

"Let's get right down to business." Brook fairly exuded confidence as he drew a chair close to the desk. "We ain't got any time to waste, you an' me. Right down to brass tacks, says I."

"You're here again to intercede for Carter?" the governor asked.

"That's th' ticket!"

"The courts have settled that case, Brook," the governor answered. "I simply will not interfere."

"You're wrong, absolutely wrong on both counts, governor," Brook contradicted flatly. "Th' courts ain't settled Carter's case, not by a jugful. They only think they have. We're gonna settle it, you an' me, here an' now, an' th' way I want it settled, too. Besides, you are gonna interfere, your own remark to th' contrary notwithstandin'."

"I repeat, Brook," the governor countered, as he stiffened and his eyes flashed, "that as far as I am concerned the case of Carter is closed, irrevocably closed!"

"Easy, governor; not so fast," Brook cautioned. "Let's talk this thing over. Now——"

"There's nothing more to discuss," the governor interrupted.

"Maybe you'll change your mind," Brook snorted, "when you know I'm here to get a pardon fer Carter."

"You're wasting my time and your own, Brook. That's all!"

"We've tried every other means," Brook continued, heedless of the interruption, "an' you're our last chance, governor."

"Carter had a fair trial?"

"As those things go," Brook sneered.

"He's guilty, isn't he?"

"What's that got to do with it?"

"Everything!" the governor snapped.

"Not to my way o' thinkin'," Brook laughed mockingly. "We look at things from different points o' view. Guilty er not guilty, Carter's a friend o' mine, an' I stand by him through thick an' thin. He's due fer th' chair at seven this ev'nin'." He drew a heavy gold watch from his pocket and glanced at it. "It's nearly noon now—eleven-ten, to be exact. You can get th' pardon to Warden Wehler by six o'clock. What do you say?"

"No!"

"Nothin' doin', eh?"

"Absolutely nothing!"

"Get this, governor!" Brooks spoke fiercely as he leaned closer and emphasized each word with his blunt forefinger on the desk top. "About two hours back a big limousine started south along th' river road to th' big town. That just fit in fine with my plans. Th' birds come to me an' saved me th' trouble o' goin' after 'em." He paused to clear his throat. "In that machine was a woman an' her daughter an' th' chauffeur, o' course. About fifteen miles from here th' car was held up, an' th' women——"

"What's all this got to do with the Carter case?"

"Just this, governor," Brook sneered evilly. "Them skirts belong to you, your wife an' daughter. See? My men are holdin' 'em. It's them er Carter. Get me? You gotta choose an' choose quick, too. If Carter goes, they'll pay fer his goin'—both o' 'em."

"My God!" the governor exclaimed. "You wouldn't!"

"If Carter lives," Brook went on, ignoring the governor's show of feeling, "if you sign th' pardon I've got all ready fer you, they'll come back home th' worse fer th' experience. See? It's simple, ain't it?"

"I can't!" the governor breathed. "Carter's only getting what he deserves."

"It's two fer one," Brook continued. "I'm desperate, an' I mean business. It's th' women who'll pay, you know."

"But Carter's guilty!"

"An' your wife an' daughter are innocent!"

Trouble grew in the governor's eyes, and the lines of care deepened in his haggard face.

"You wouldn't dare to harm them, Brook."

"They'll pay fer Carter!" Brook laughed mirthlessly. "Death'll be easy to what's comin' to them if you don't go through with this."

"What do you mean?"

"Vitriol!" Brook gloated.

"Oh!" the governor cried out like a wounded thing.

"They'll be hideous things," Brook went on, taking pleasure in the torture he was inflicting.

"Let me have the pardon!"

"You're one wise guy, governor," Brook chuckled.

With trembling hands the governor unfold-

ed the document that Brook drew from his pocket and tendered him. He perused it with the utmost deliberation. Then he snatched up his pen, scrawled his signature across the bottom of the sheet, and affixed the official seal.

"You win, Brook," he muttered, as he blotted his signature and carefully refolded the crisp sheet.

"Get it on its way!" Brook snapped, "an' sit tight, governor. Remember—no monkey-shines. Don't try to cross me. When that happy idea strikes you, give a thought er two to your womenfolks."

The governor pressed a buzzer, and his secretary reappeared.

"Get the Metropolitan Express, Lytton," the governor directed dully, "and take this paper directly to Warden Wehler. You have very little time, so you will have to hurry."

"I'll make it," Lytton answered, glancing from one man to the other with a puzzled expression in his eyes. "Don't worry, sir."

He very carefully placed the pardon in his wallet, tucked the wallet away in an inside coat pocket, and hurried out.

At six-forty as the Metropolitan Express was slowing up with furious panting, twenty-five minutes behind schedule, at the station at the foot of the hill on which the gloomy prison stood, the governor's wife and daughter returned to the executive mansion in a hysterical condition. While the governor was listening to their somewhat incoherent account of their experiences of the day, young Lytton, buttoning his coat as he ran, hurried from the train and pushed his way through the crowded waiting-room. Curly Bird was just coming in as the governor's secretary rushed out. They jostled against each other heavily in the narrow doorway. Lytton glared at the tramp savagely and ran to the nearest taxi.

"Up the hill! Fast!" Lytton snapped.

Curly Bird stood blinking around momentarily in the glare of the waiting-room, then turned away from the warmth and once more plunged out into the cold.

"I gotta beat it away from here," he mumbled as he went, "an' beat it fast. I'm on my way."

There was new life in Curly Bird as he tramped along, a spring in his step that was not there before. He was whistling softly, too. Soon the lights of the village were winking at his back. Where the road took an abrupt turn he paused to glance behind him furtively as though fearful of pursuit.

"Wot th' hell!" he exclaimed as all the lights in the great prison suddenly blinked out. "Wot th'——"

Puzzled but still whistling under his breath, he resumed his journey, never even knowing that Carter, in spite of all his high hopes, had finally passed through the little green door whence there is no return. As he stumbled southward in the shadows and the whirling snow, Curly Bird was clutching in his claw-like fingers, under cover of his ragged coat, the wallet he had lifted from Lytton's pocket as they passed in the station doorway.

"It's sure one fat leather," Curly Bird was thinking, "an' I'm wonderin' how soon it'll be safe to take time out an' figger up my winnin's. Sure some juicy feelin' leather!"

GOOD LEG EXERCISE

FOX-TROTTING is the greatest leg exercise ever invented, according to Dr. Karl Heinstadt, a Swiss physician culturist, who estimates that the average fox-trotter covers a mile and a quarter every twenty minutes, while the waltzer's record is less than half that.

Continuing his calculations, the doctor declares that a young woman who does not miss a dance between 10 o'clock at night and 5 in the morning, with about a half-hour out for a midnight supper, exercises just as much as if she had walked thirty miles, and seldom shows any ill effects, although probably she would object if asked to walk a single mile along the boulevards of Paris, without taking a taxicab.

"Few people know how strong they actually are," said Dr. Heinstadt. "The average business man takes more than 7,000,000 steps in a year—amounting to a mileage that would astonish most holders of world's records."

Found In a Hollow Tree

HENRY GORMLEY, of St. Louis, had in his possession a map and travelers' guide of the United States printed in 1832. Mr. Gormley had the map framed for preservation. Who the original owner of the guide was and how he came to leave it in the wilds of Montana, where Mr. Gormley found it, is a subject for speculation.

Gormley, however, believed that he could trace it to an unfortunate miner who died in the early '50s while engaged in a frenzied hunt for a lost mine.

It was May, said Mr. Gormley, and I was chopping timber in Chouteau, Montana.

I started to cut a large pine tree about four feet through.

As I stepped up and scanned it I failed to notice it was hollow, but at the first stroke a squirrel ran out of a small hole.

I found that it was hollow, and soon a hole big enough to introduce my head appeared. Suddenly I dropped my ax to the ground and thrust my hand into the hollow. There, lying on the bottom on a soft bed of decaying wood, was a sheet of paper neatly folded. In it was the map and guide, exactly as you see it now, and they had surely been in that tree forty or fifty years.

Leaning against the wooden wall, muzzle up, as though placed there by its owner, was an old flintlock musket. And clinging to the barrel was something whiter than the papers.

It was the skeleton of a right hand.

I didn't do much more work that afternoon. I bore my treasures off to camp, and then examined them. You see for yourself what the travelers' guide is, and as for the musket, it did not differ materially from thousands of other old shooting irons. However, filed into the barrel, not many inches from the muzzle, were the letters H. K. T., evidently the initials of the owner.

And I believe I knew the unfortunate who lost the hand. As I told of my find in camp that night, one of the boys, who had been in Montana several years, gave the following history of two men's search for the lost Devil's Hoof Mine:

"Few knew of the existence of this nugget pocket, and as the early years of the gold times passed away, the people possessing the secret died one by one, until a patriarchal Indian was the last left. He died, and in dying gave the birch bark map of its location to a young trapper who watched at his death-bed. This trapper was Horace Thompson.

"As soon as the old red man was decently buried Thompson took a friend into his confidence, and together they set out to find Devil's Hoof Mine.

"One evening Horace announced their journey about completed. As there was an extra gun and a number of other useless articles in their packs they decided to hide them away for the time being, and perhaps get them on their return trip. A hollow tree was found, and Thompson, on his hands and knees, received the articles from his comrade and placed them one by one in the hole. As he took the musket and was setting it inside the traitor raised a pick in the air and brought it down with terrific force on the doomed Thompson. The great spike was driven through skull and brain, and Horace died.

"Hastily gathering their belongings into one pack, the false friend set off, after robbing the kneeling dead of the birch bark map.

"But the murderer never found Devil's Hoof Mine. He was set upon by a gang of white and red outlaws and killed. But before dying he confessed his crime to one of the Indians, who in turn told the story to a trader. The mine has never been discovered."

That is the story—concluded Mr. Gormley—and I am confident that H. K. T. stands for Horace K. Thompson.

Send us a one-cent stamp to cover postage, and we will mail you a copy of "Moving Picture Stories."

INSIDE DOPE

BY

HAMILTON CRAIGIE

APRIL first! To Jim Beasley, christened James Cadwallader Beasley, the date meant merely the last day of the week, and consequently pay day at the Quality Lunch and Cafeteria, corner of Houston and Van Dam.

Therefore, James, hurrying to work this bright spring morning, intent only on reaching the place where he labored twelve hours out of the twenty-four, saw only with half an eye the bulky wallet lying on the sidewalk just under his hurrying feet.

Almost without thinking, Beasley stooped, made a darting thrust, then, with a low cry, recoiled as if his fingers had touched so much TNT. April first! Suppose it was a plant; it looked very much like it. He gave a quick glance to right and left, but the street appeared to be deserted; no peering face agrin with malicious enjoyment met his gaze. Well——

His hand closed on it; lifting it from the sidewalk with a quick, swooping motion, he put it in his pocket. The wallet was heavy; Beasley postponed his examination of it until, reaching the cafeteria, he was able to retire to his place behind the counter.

There, for a moment, stealing a stealthy look at it, he saw that it was a large one; one of those comfortably old-fashioned affairs with a flap and buckle protecting its contents from prying eyes—and fingers. And he just had time to see the edges of a thick wad of bills, and they were yellow, when the entrance of an early customer cut short his brief inspection.

James C. Beasley was honest as the day is long, and in his case it was a long day with a vengeance. With the departure of the customer once more he returned to his belated inspection.

Then his eyes bulged out; a startled exclamation escaped him.

"Great gravy!" whispered James Cadwallader Beasley in varying tones of awe, wonder and unbelief. In all his life he had never seen anything bigger than a twenty, usually unaccompanied by anything larger than a lonesome casenote or two, but there was easily a thousand dollars in that wallet: ten centuries, one grand, a thousand iron men.

"Some jack!" was the low but earnest ejaculation of J. Cadwallader, his unaccustomed gaze taking in the wealth contained in that capacious receptacle. Treasure trove! Beasley, as has been said, had never seen anything larger than a twenty, and that at infrequent intervals: the bills in the wallet were hundred-dollar notes.

A moment he stood in musing contempla-

tion. And for a moment, too, he was conscious of a wish, deep down, that "honesty" was a word that he did not know how to spell. But if he had known, if he had been able, by so much as one single inch, to penetrate the veil of the future, to look ahead a day, an hour, yes, ten minutes even, James Cadwallader Beasley would have hurled that wallet from him as a find accursed. But how was he to know?

A simple soul, Jim Beasley, especially for an inhabitant of the big town, and honest. Now as he stood, his thoughts a whirling maze of unaccustomed question and answer, divided between whether to write to the City Hall or to put an advertisement in the papers, the door swung open noiselessly, admitting a rush of cool air and an individual, tall, flashily dressed, with a thin dark face, close-set eyes and a straight gash for a mouth beneath a flat, broken nose. From his green velour hat to his highly polished cordovan brogues, he was dapper, smooth as the voice which now came to Beasley in thick, slurring syllables:

"I just lost a wallet," came the voice, "on m' way to th' bank. Guess I must have dropped it in here, fella, or somewheres outside," with a quick, flashing down glance at the floor.

Beasley had never seen the man before, but of course he might have been served by Harrison, his partner. But if J. Cadwallader *was* honest he was taking no chances; the fellow looked like one of those confidence men. He said slowly and carefully with what he fancied was an assumption of metropolitan ease:

"You've got t' show *me*, old-timer," said J. Cadwallader. "You prove your claim to the money and it's yours—*but that ain't saying I've got it.*"

A sneer edged the thin lips of the man in the green hat.

"I thought I'd be in Dutch," he said in a grating voice. "If I ain't *too* officious, fella," he continued, "you're one of these here *counter*-irritants, I suppose."

That was over Beasley's head. Now he scratched it, pondering. "W-e-l-l——" he was beginning, when abruptly he had an inspiration.

"Was there a thousand bucks in it?" he asked, pleased obviously with his shrewdness.

The stranger in the green hat favored the counter-man with a peculiar look. Perhaps, after all, this tall individual with the guileless countenance might be spoofing him. But he did not hesitate.

"You said it, mister," he made answer incisively. "Those are the figures. I take back what I said just now. I've gotta hand it to you f'r bein' honest."

"Well, I won't never be arraigned before a court for stealing the pennies from a dead man's eyes," remarked Beasley with sincerity. "Here you are," he continued without more ado, passing over the wallet.

The stranger's face underwent a swift transformation. Wonder, amusement, satisfaction were each mirrored in turn in the small eyes, the cynical mouth. But he bestowed scarcely a glance upon the wallet with its thousand dollars. He turned, and before Beasley could so much as blink his pale-blue eyes his coattails had whipped around the door—he was gone.

Business was slower than usual. Jim Beasley had been glancing over the paper. Now at the opening of the door he glanced up in a mild surprise as a beetle-browed individual in a derby hat, dark, inconspicuous clothes and shoes with thick soles and broad square toes, came walking into the lunch room.

This second stranger, just as had his earlier visitor, came straight for the counter, leaned over it, his hard face a grim mask. Turning back the lapel of his coat in the process of "flashing his badge," the plain-clothesman spoke hoarsely out of the corner of his mouth:

"Th' lieutenant 'd like t' see you, little stranger," he prefaced. "C'mon now; y' better take a walk."

Beasley's round face went even blanker than nature had designed it. His mouth was a round O of surprise and trepidation.

"Why, I haven't done anything," he spoke thickly. "I haven't——"

"Tell it t' th' lieutenant," informed the detective brusquely. "Th' charge is grand larceny, if you want t' know, young fella, but it's my duty to warn you that anything you say'll be used against you, according to law."

Beasley's explanations he cut short in the middle with a growling: "That'll do, young

fella; that'll hold you!" But finally, at the young man's fervid plea, he grudgingly allowed him to telephone Harrison, his partner.

This done, to an accompaniment of much distempered language from Harrison, disjointed explanations from J. Cadwallader, the latter, in company of the plain-clothesman, walked outward to the street.

It was a beautiful spring day, but in the soul of James Cadwallader Beasley there was no responsive echo. That was in his boots as he reflected upon the amazing ways of a providence which was beyond his simple understanding.

With every eye upon him, as he fancied, the short walk was a nightmare of discomfort; after what seemed a century, however, they reached the station. There was a policeman in the doorway; him Beasley's captor engaged in a brief, whispered colloquy; then in a moment, as it seemed, the young man found himself facing a grim-faced man with a huge military mustache, enthroned behind a high desk.

"What's the charge, officer?" snapped this dignitary, the lieutenant in charge of the blotter. His fierce, red-lined countenance seemed, to Beasley at least, to breathe of dungeons, of bread and water, the third degree—battle, murder and sudden death.

For a moment there ensued a painful silence. Then:

"Grand larceny," declared the plain-clothesman, whose name was Haggerty. He turned to a man standing a little removed; Beasley had not noticed him before; an oldish man, he could see now, but with an appearance of money without a doubt; you saw it in the high silk hat, the long fur coat, the patent-leather shoes.

"This gentleman," explained the detective, "I saw him myself, lieutenant. He was walking along the avenue," he went on, "and the prisoner here frisked him for his poke. A desperate character—a bad actor, if you ask me," he ended.

He scowled at Beasley, glancing again at the man in the fur coat.

"He must have knowed I was wise," he continued, "for he slipped the money to his pal in the lunch room just in time for the latter to make his getaway. He was an accessory before and after the fact, and as such I shall make the charge," he finished.

Poor J. Cadwallader felt somehow mentally and physically bruised, as if, indeed, he had already experienced the third degree in very truth. First, he had been honest, strictly so; second, arrested; third, in a fair (or a decidedly unfair) way of being committed to durance vile—ruined, his life spoiled before it had yet begun. And then for a split second he saw red.

"That's a lie, and he knows it!" he shouted. "I—I'm an honest man. This—this officer—he's a liar, I say."

But he got no further. A hand like a ham shut off his speech, his head sang, his eyes blurred, as from dim leagues of distance he heard the voice of the lieutenant:

"Well, he looks like a crook to me, I'll say so. You'll press the charge, of course, Mr. Northern," he continued, turning to the man in the fur coat and high silk hat. "However," he went on, "we'll leave no stone unturned to recover the money, depend upon it."

Jim Beasley felt as if the world had suddenly dropped out from under him, leaving him in empty space. He was being "framed," no doubt of that, but what was there he could do? Just nothing. A man with a sporting inclination could have written his own ticket on what J. Cadwallader thought of his chances, when of a sudden there came a commotion in the doorway, oaths, a scuffling. Heads craned, and what they saw was a man with a face twisted, contorted, held by two big policemen; he jerked this way and that, his curses soiling the air in a turbid stream.

Beasley, looking with the rest, felt his blood pound in his temples. He turned, twisting in the grasp of the man who had almost throttled him just before.

"That's him!" he shouted. "That's the very man—the one I gave the wallet to."

The realization that, somehow, he had been double-crossed, hogtied and triple cinched; that his honesty, his singular lack of guile, had put him where he was; that, in short, honesty is the best policy for crooks on occasion, filled him with a sort of frenzied calm. And to add to his cup there came now the voice of Haggerty, the plain-clothesman:

"That's the other one, lieutenant," he ex-

plained. "That's his pal—Denver Ed Gilhooly."

Misfortunes never come singly; sometimes they come in pairs or even a full hand, and our hero had, as it were, drawn everything in the deck but the card which spelled even a Chinaman's chance. The sallow-faced man, Denver Ed Gilhooly, moved his traplike mouth in a sour grin. He vented a sarcastic snicker; turning to Beasley, "Hello, boob!" he said.

James Cadwallader Beasley's simple nature could stand no more. With a growling shout he leaped, his arms outstretched, but it was no use; the same hamlike hand closed upon his shoulder with a grip of iron; he was whirled backward, in his ears that mocking, ironic laughter searing his soul, giving him, if he had but known it, his accolade of experience.

The lieutenant was rubbing his fat hands and chuckling.

"Well, well, 'tis like a play," he was saying. "It certainly is——"

His words ended abruptly as, taking the wallet from the detective, he glanced hastily at its contents. Then his face reddened like an angry sunset; he seemed for a moment to be struggling with an emotion too deep for words. He swallowed twice, then managed to articulate, extending the wallet to the aloof figure in the fur coat and the high hat.

"Do you identify this wallet as your property, Mr. Northern?" he asked in a curious voice.

The man called "Mr. Northern" in his turn extended a hand, blue-veined, aristocratic, taking the wallet from the lieutenant. One gaze he gave at its contents, then a sort of flabbergasted look came in his keen, thoughtful face.

"Why—what—that is—*y-e-s*—this is my property," he said, "but that's curious. I haven't seen it for quite a while."

Plunging his hand into the receptacle, he withdrew it, a number of bills between finger and thumb. He held them up, waving them slightly from right to left.

There came a shout of laughter—epic, homeric; it roared and rocked, even as there came a gasp, a groan. Denver Ed Gilhooly had fainted.

Before the gentleman in the fur coat could complete his words, of a sudden there was a second outcry at the door, and a little man, a rabbit of a man with the unmistakable bearing of a servant, a secretary, burst into the room.

"Mister Northern!" he piped. "I want Mister Northern, the actor."

His gaze upon the man in the fur coat, he made a sort of skipping hop, his hand in his pocket and——

"Here's your wallet, Mr. Northern," he said. "Here's your wallet, sir. I took the wrong one out of the safe this morning, and I've been looking for you, sir, all over town."

James Cadwallader Beasley could only stare. As in a fog it came to him with the brusque speech of the lieutenant that he was free. Denver Ed—it was all clear now with the words of the policeman at his side suddenly solicitous for his well-being. The dip had seen the actor drop the wallet, had seen Beasley retrieve it from the walk. Haggerty, too, had seen—too late, however, to acquaint the actor with his loss. And what more natural than that the detective should think that Beasley, too, had witnessed the incident? But it was all pure bunk, of course, his accusation that the young man had "frisked" it from the actor's pocket. The plain-clothesman's sight of Denver Ed, however, as the latter had incautiously displayed his trove as he had departed from the lunch room, had furnished him with a sum in addition—or subtraction, if you prefer—which gave point logically enough to his statement that Beasley had slipped the money to his pal in the lunch room."

Doubtless, however, the detective had him—Beasley—figured for a pretty slick article, and then some. That was, at any rate, J. Cadwallader's thought.

Head in air, he left the station, walking out of this story to what new adventures may some day be told.

But if you, gentle reader, confess to a curiosity as to the actual *inside* dope on that wallet, here's the explanation and the finale of the entire drama:

For the wallet was indeed a "curiosity," a relic of a day and age now passing, if not already past: *Stage money!*

Send us a one-cent stamp to cover postage, and we will mail you a copy of "Moving Picture Stories."

Legends of Fish

THE Japanese have a legend that fish are the embodiment of the souls of naval officers, and the African negroes believe that magicians assume the shape of fish, and come to their nets to work evil.

An amusing story is told of the skate. It seems that, in years gone by, when the fish assembled to select for themselves a king, the skate was behind, and his mouth is now one-sided from his not being chosen king.

There was an old Highland tradition that the herrings quitted the coasts where blood had been shed, and it seems that this notion was revived after the battle of Copenhagen, "when it was said that they had deserted the Baltic on account of the noise of the guns."

A story is related of St. Corentin, of Brittany, that every morning a little fish was seen in a fountain near the hermitage. The saint caught it, cut off a sufficient quantity for his repast, then threw the rest in the water, when the fish became whole again, and on the following morning was ready for another quartering.

"An Author," writes Miss Phipson, in her "Animal Lore of Shakespeare's Time," "actually affirms that the whale was designed by Providence for the special purpose of, at certain seasons of the year, frightening the herring away from its native shores into those regions where it would be obtainable with greater ease by man."

A popular nickname for the beam in Cornwall is "choke-children." The story runs that one day St. Leven was fishing, when he caught two of these fish on one hook three times in succession. He took them home to his sister, but the result was unfortunate, for "the fish were cooked, and the children, being hungry, were choked by eating the bones."

"In Normandy," writes Hoare, in his "Giraldus," "a few days before the death of Henry II, the fish of a certain pool fought so furiously with each other that the neighboring people were attracted to the spot by the noise. So desperate was the conflict that scarcely a fish was found alive in the morning, thus by a wonderful prognostic foretelling the death of one by that of many."

The fishermen in Scotland declare that the salmon's tail is pointed "since Loki became a salmon, and was caught by that appendage while slipping through a net set for him by the gods." Curious to say, in some parts of Scotland the salmon is held in great aversion.

The pike is an important fish in folk-legends. In Russian fairy-tales the pike is a form assumed by the devil in order to eat the young hero, who has become a little perch. Some old naturalists have accounted for the sudden and mysterious appearance of the pike in ponds far from other water by the theory that they were produced by the heat of the sun from a weed known as pickerel-weed.

A curious legend is related by an Eastern traveler who, describing a river which flows from the Caucasus into the Black Sea, says: "Every year there arrives in this part of the river a great quantity of fish. The people cut off the flesh on one side of them, eat it, and let the fish go. The next year the fish return again and offer the other side, which they had preserved untouched. It is then discovered that new flesh has replaced the old."

The oyster is the subject of many strange legends, and as far back as the time of Pliny was supposed to be produced by the dew. In his "Natural History" he thus describes the origin of the pearl oyster: "It is engendered by the dews of heaven falling in the open shells at the breeding time. The quality of the pearl varies according to the amount of dew imbibed, being lustrous if that were pure and dull if it were foul. Cloudy weather spoils its color, lightning stoppeth the growth, and thunder maketh the shell-fish unproductive."

DETECTIVE FICKS —ART LOVER

BY

DONALD GEORGE McDONALD

CHIEF IRWIN got right to the point of the interview. "Ficks, you have probably read of the thirty thousand dollar hold-up of the State Bank messenger last night?"

"No, sir," replied the other, a square-jawed yet kindly faced man of about twenty-five. "Haven't had the time to look at the papers, but I've heard people talking about it. Tell me, chief, what was the idea of a bank sending their messenger out at night? That looks like darned foolishness."

"Because there have been so many daylight hold-ups. That stuff is getting to be the fad, you know—just like short skirts. You will remember that this same bank lost four thousand dollars in one just last summer. They thought that if they gave their messenger an escort, well-armed, there'd be no trouble." The chief thought a moment, then continued: "You know that dark block on Congress street; you remember the alley in the middle of the block? Well, sir, the messenger and his guard slowed down when they came to this alley, walking because it was but a short distance. They slowed down, I say, and the coast appeared clear so far as they could determine, but after they'd passed it by thirty feet each of 'em got soaked on the head. They each got it the same instant and crumpled to the ground unconscious. They were found by a passer-by, and when they were looked over the packages of money which the messenger carried in his pockets were missing. That's all. There were no footprints other than those of the messenger and his guard, though the sidewalks were covered with slush. There were no clues of any kind. We don't know whether it was a one-, two- or threeman job."

"You say they believe they were struck about thirty feet beyond the alley?"

"Yes."

"What sort of stuff made up that thirty thousand dollars?"

"Currency," replied the chief sharply. "Currency, that's what makes it a damn hard case to trace. We have nothing to go by."

"In what form was the currency?" persisted the detective.

"Practically the whole of it in twenty and fifty-dollar bills, if that's what you mean."

Both men were silent for a few moments. This was going to be a knotty problem to solve, but they were fairly well accustomed to such jobs as this. They were men of stalwart bodies and alert, keen brains. They continually matched wits on the checker-board of life with the brilliant evil wits of the country. Sometimes the force lost, but, taken as a whole, more often they won.

Presently the younger man said: "Chief, do you want me to take the case? Is that why you called me in?"

"Yes; why, yes," he laughed. "I meant to tell you that before this. Yes, I want you to take the case, in the first place, because it's in your section of the city, and in the second place because I want to see you make good. I want that good wife of yours to stop taking in boarders and have a home of her own. You showed good work on the Morelock case as far as you carried it. This one you ought to handle from soup to nuts, and if you get the men who did it I'll see to it that you get the dessert as well."

"Thanks," said the officer, and without further words he flipped on his cap and passed out the door.

The first day after his interview he visited the scene of the hold-up. The alley which the men had passed before being struck separated two of the older warehouses of the city. Ficks paced off what he estimated to be thirty feet and stopped, looking about him carefully. He remembered what the chief had said about there having been no visible footprints. Then he recalled that when he had seen the bank messenger and his guard at the hospital that morning, he had noticed that the wound on each of them was on the forward top of the head. He also remembered what the doctors had said about the injury having been made with a hard object—more unyielding than the customary sandbag.

Connecting these three bits of information together, Ficks looked up at the building and saw what he firmly expected to see—a window, the sill of which came some four inches above his head.

Next he sought the manager of the warehouse and asked to look in the office that fronted on the street. The manager, a stout, jovial fellow, found the key, and together they entered the empty room. Ficks stepped to the window, and examined but did not touch the catch, which was fastened, nor did he permit himself to touch any part of the window or sills.

An exclamation burst from the manager's lips. "This lock has been forced," he cried, pointing to a back door which led into the main room of the warehouse. A brief examination satisfied Ficks. The two men then passed through to the next room.

"And here," said the detective, indicating a small window opening on the alley, "is where they got in the building."

A neat circle of glass about five or six inches in diameter had been carefully cut out just below the lock.

"Don't touch this window or lock," said Ficks to the surprised manager, "and don't let anybody else touch 'em. Now we'll just take another look in the front office."

Further search yielding nothing new, they prepared to leave, when Ficks suddenly stepped over in one corner and, stooping, looked behind a steam radiator. A smile broke on his face as he straightened up. "They're there," he said.

"W-what?" asked the other.

"The tender implements that knocked the senses out of the bank messenger and his guard who didn't guard. Now, I want to use that phone."

Fifteen minutes after Anderson, the finger-print expert on the force, arrived at the warehouse. After he had finished his examination of the window in the office and in the back room, Ficks very carefully withdrew one long club and one short club from behind the radiator.

"Look these over, too, Andy. See if they left their calling cards on these."

While the expert was making a thorough examination, the detective said: "You know, Andy, I believe this affair was a one-man job. I don't know what your exam. is going to show, but I know that's the way I look at it. Notice the width of the window—altogether too narrow for two men to occupy at the same time."

The other officer looked up. "You're right, Ficks; it is a one-man job, and believe me he must be some man to stand in such a cramped position and deliver such a wallop. The examination unfortunately shows that the man wore gloves—undoubtedly rubber, but careful as he was in that particular, he was mighty careless in another. One glove had a hole in the first finger of the right hand—a hole about a quarter of an inch in diameter. The section of finger-print that shows is too small for evidence, but it proves you are right, for that same hole

shows on everything—each of the clubs and the two windows."

That evening the bank messenger died. He had been well liked at the bank, and his death caused a considerable stir—another long write-up of the crime in the papers and hot editorials begging the police to find the murderer.

The second day brought no further results. Ficks worked prodigiously. He was spurred on by something more than a desire for justice only. He was working for the wife he loved, working for her health, which was steadily failing. The promotion promised him must be his, so he worked to the limit of his strength.

The third day Chief Irwin called him in. In all kindness he told him that unless developments came a bit faster another officer would have to be added, which Ficks knew only too well would cut down his own credit some seventy-five per cent. if the criminal were caught.

That evening he went home disheartened. His wife tried to cheer him up, but her care-worn face only served to add to his discouragement. The boarders had had their supper and gone to their rooms, but Ficks usually got home late, and his wife always kept the food hot on the stove.

His appetite had gone with his customary buoyant spirits. He swallowed a little coffee, ate a roll and butter, then he felt the small arm of his wife around his neck and her cheek pressed his.

"Cheer up, Tom," she said. "We got a new boarder to-day; that'll help some."

"Who is he?" inquired the man listlessly.

"An artist."

"Poor, I suppose; they always are."

"Yes, he's poor enough, I guess, for he had few enough clothes with him, but at any rate he paid his week in advance. And, by the way, Tom, he didn't have a thing but a twenty-dollar bill. I didn't have any change, and told him you'd take him the eight dollars when you came home."

Ficks leaned back in his chair and, withdrawing a few bills, counted out eight dollars, then asked indifferently: "Wifey, where's the twenty he gave you?"

In a moment she had brought it to her husband, who spread it out on the table, looking at it curiously. It was a brand-new bill. Presently he leaned forward, and gave it a minute examination, after which he folded it carefully and sealed it in an envelope. His wife looked on, astonished.

"What is it, Tom? Tell me."

"Nothin', darling, nothing. Just a little study I want to make of a twenty-dollar bill. You know, dear, a detective ought to know every detail of design on bills of every denomination. This is a brand-new bill, and I'd like to keep it a couple of days while I go over it. Now," he continued, "I'm going to run up to the corner drugstore for a minute to get some pipe tobacco."

But when he entered the store he went immediately to the telephone and called Chief Irwin.

"Hello, chief," cried Ficks when central made the connection. "Say, will you tell me if there was anything particular in the pockets of the messenger's clothing?"

"Why, no," came the reply, "nothing special. As I remember it, there were some keys, a pipe and pouch, old papers and envelopes and such truck."

"Wasn't there something else?" asked Ficks. "Can't you remember anything else?"

"W-why, yes—yes, I recall now. There was a bag of candy."

Ficks's strong right hand trembled so he could scarcely hold the receiver to his ear. He huskily cleared his throat.

"What kind of candy?"

"Peppermint, I believe."

"Thanks," snapped Ficks, and he dropped, rather than placed, the receiver back on the hook. When the whirling thoughts calmed themselves a bit he bought his tobacco and went home.

After taking off his hat and coat and putting on his slippers, he mounted the stairs and knocked on the door at the end of the long hall. There was silence for a few moments, then the door opened a crack.

"I just came up to get acquainted and to give you the eight dollars change we're owin' you. Sorry you had to wait."

The door opened wide, and the detective found himself confronted by a pleasant-faced young man, slightly shorter than himself, who smiled and motioned him in.

"Don't mention it," he said, drawing over a chair for his visitor. "It was no inconvenience

whatever, for I decided not to eat supper—something I do frequently."

The detective looked at him sharply. "Do you mean that you couldn't have eaten if you'd wanted to; that this eight dollars is all you have?"

"You're perfectly correct. That's all I have right now, but you know we artists are hopeful fellows. Now, I expect to sell some bit of my work before many days, and then I'll be all set pretty again. We're accustomed to that sort of living, and those of us who truly love art don't mind occasional privations."

"Yes," said the detective, determined to win the confidence of the man, "I can understand something of your feeling, for I have always loved art. Indeed, it has been one of the regrets of my life that my parents didn't let me study."

"What business are you in if I may ask?"

The detective paused, as if weighing certain matters in his mind. "Why, I am a collector," he finally replied, "a collector of bad accounts. Disagreeable work, very. I shall be glad when the day comes that I can go out and get the worst of the bunch, then quit my job for something pleasanter."

"Well," laughed the artist, "the day will never come when you'll collect on me. I shall always pay my board bill or get out of the house."

Detective Ficks was silent, and he was doing an immense amount of thinking. How was it, he continually asked himself, that this man could have had in his possession a twenty-dollar bill which had upon it the unmistakable odor of peppermint? The chief had said that the messenger had carried the packets of bills in his pockets. Could the stolen money have been put in circulation so promptly that this artist might be the second or third man to receive that particular twenty-dollar bill? It was extremely doubtful that any thief could be so reckless as to try to pass that money at once. Ficks knew the ways of men who make big hauls. They invariably speed away from the scene of robbery or murder or both just as fast as they could travel, and they never attempted to pass the stuff until the excitement had blown over.

He looked about the room. A heavy easel stood in the corner, and on it a large canvas, while beside these stood a small Japanese stand holding paints and brushes. On the dresser lay the palette and a variety of clippings and papers.

"Well," said the detective, "I'll have to be getting downstairs to my wife" As he passed through the door he paused. "I don't believe I know your name."

"Clipper," said the other, "Harry Clipper."

"Snappy name," laughed Ficks. "See you again. Want to see some of your work."

Once downstairs the muscles on the man's face tightened. He sought his wife.

"Carrie," he said, placing a hand on her shoulder, "did you tell that Clipper what my work was?"

"No," she replied; then in woman's usual curiosity added: "Why?"

"Oh, nothing much. Just would prefer that he didn't know. I told him I was a collector of bad accounts."

His wife looked up at him and smiled. "Tom, what is it about that fellow? You suspect something. I know you do. You looked puzzled over that twenty-dollar bill he gave me, and then you said you had to run out to the corner to get some pipe tobacco, and you haven't smoked this evening when you always do. Now, you don't want him to know you're a de——"

"Sh!" warned the man. "Don't say it out loud."

"Won't you tell me, dear?" the woman pleaded. "We're working together. I ought to know, too."

"You win," said the big man with a broad grin, and then he sat down, lit his pipe and told her the whole story.

She laid her hand affectionately on his arm when he had finished. "What do you mean to do, hubby?"

"Well, for a starter, dear, have you any more of that excellent elderberry wine?"

"Yes."

"Good. I think our friend upstairs would enjoy a bit of it—and some buttered crackers. You know he didn't have any supper to-night." There was a suspicion of a twinkle in the detective's eye.

"Tom, what on earth has struck you? You goin' to poison him?"

"Gosh, no. Your wine didn't poison me, did it?"

With curiosity playing over her face the woman started for the kitchen.

"Oh, no, wife; you stay here. I'll get the stuff together."

The next morning at eight-thirty Ficks walked into the chief's office. He carried a bundle in his hand, and he held it with extreme care. Placing it on the desk before the man, Ficks painstakingly removed the wrappings.

"Chief," he said, "I wanted to show these to you. I want Andy to look them over and make a careful record of the finger-prints he finds on this glass and plate."

"Whose prints are they?"

"They may be those of the man wanted for the thirty-thousand-dollar hold-up and murder of the bank messenger, and then again they may not."

"Fine; go to it, Ficks. I'll have Andy right on 'em."

"Listen, chief." The detective leaned over the desk. "No need right now of following down those prints in any other city. All I want to know is whether or not that guy ever worked Detroit before. Get me?"

The chief nodded and pushed a button. Andy came in as the detective was going out the door, and the men nodded a friendly greeting. A ring of the phone on the desk caused the latter to pause. The chief answered.

"Yes, he's here; just a second, I'll call him." He motioned to Ficks. "You're wanted—woman's voice."

"Hello," called Ficks. There was a pause, and the officer grinned. "All right; good, I'll be right up—about five minutes."

A few minutes later the detective hung up his hat in the hall of his home. His wife appeared in the doorway.

"How long ago did he leave?" asked the man.

"Just a couple of minutes before I called," replied the woman."

"Say where he was going?"

"No."

"All right then, I'll get busy."

Ficks hastened upstairs and unlocked the door at the end of the hall. He entered and looked about him.

The room was in perfect order. Bed covers were neatly turned back over the foot. The dresser had been tidied up. The easel had been pushed over in a corner so that the draught from the open window might have free entrance. The artist had started work on his picture, for the entire canvas was covered with a heavy blue pigment.

"Certainly putting up a good bluff," thought Ficks as he eyed the work. "We'll see how far he gets with it before something happens. Cool enough, too. Should think his hand would be pretty shaky for painting after killing a man and with a sentence of 'life' hanging over his head."

For the next hour Ficks searched every inch of the room without finding the slightest trace of any of the missing money.

A little later he was telling his wife of his fruitless search when the phone rang. He answered it.

"What luck, chief?"

"The man's not on record in Detroit," said the voice at the other end. "Good, clear finger-prints, too, but we never saw 'em before."

"Fine!" Ficks hung up the receiver, looked at his wife and grinned. "Everything's comin' out first class, dear." He stepped up to the woman whom he loved with his whole soul. His big arm encircled her, and his voice grew tender and soft. "Wifey," he said, "when this deal is over you and I are going to have it like peaches and cream. No more boarding-house stuff for my girl. A home of our own pretty soon now. Just a wee bit more patience." He gave her a final squeeze. "Now I'm off again. Don't know just when I'll get back."

But he was home at seven o'clock. His appetite had returned, and he ate a hearty supper, after which he and his wife played "Rummy" until eleven o'clock. Then the woman arose.

"I'm sleepy, Tom. Guess I'll go to bed."

"All right, dear. I got some stuff to work on. I'll come later."

Ficks sat and smoked his pipe while the clock on the mantel struck twelve and one. Then he got up stiffly, knocked the ashes out of his pipe and climbed the stairs to his room.

He had a dangerous job on his hands, and he was anxious to have it over. In his bedroom, which was adjacent to the one occupied by Clipper, he undressed, washed, opened the

window and hopped into the bed in the free-and-easy manner of a man who is ready to take his prescribed rest. For an hour he lay there, every sense alert. No sounds came from the next room. Clipper was evidently asleep; the detective certainly hoped he was.

Carefully and in utmost silence the officer crept from his bed, noiselessly opened the door of his room and crept out in the hall, pausing before the door next to his own. He listened at the keyhole for a full five minutes before attempting to use his pass-key.

Silently he inserted it in the lock, turned it and waited. Then gently, an inch at a time, he pushed open the door until it was wide enough to permit his entrance.

On his hands and knees he crept towards the bed, listening every now and then to the heavy breathing of the sleeper. Little by little he crept nearer, and it was the chair beside the bed that was his goal.

Once the sheets of the bed rustled a bit. Ficks paused and was glad for the small, deadly thing he carried in his left hand, but he would not like to be compelled to use it until he had all his evidence collected.

He was up to the chair now on which Clipper had placed his clothing. Stealthily the detective's large but sensitive hand abstracted the contents of each pocket, returning each one before passing to the next and examining each one closely with a tiny flash which threw a weak light. His search ended, he withdrew, using the same care and deliberation until he was once more in his own bed.

"Well," he said to himself, "guess that's enough misery for one night." And then in the darkness he grinned—a broad, expansive grin, murmured "seventy-nine" once or twice, as if to impress the number on his mind, after which he fell asleep.

"Wifey," said he the next morning, "how many blankets did you give Clipper?"

"Two," she replied.

He smiled. "I don't know whether I'm right, but when you make up his bed to-day I wish you'd see whether they're both there."

Downtown Detective Ficks presented himself once more at the chief's office in headquarters.

"Ficks," said the chief somewhat sternly, "I don't know what you're up to on that case, but I'm givin' you warning this morning that you have darn little time left to handle it. The people are hounding us to catch the man, and the commissioner is jumping on my neck. He asked me yesterday afternoon who was handling the job, and I told him you were."

" 'Well,' he said, 'give him one more day, and then if he hasn't got his hands mighty close to his man, pull him off.' "

Ficks nodded assent. "I understand, chief."

"Want any help?" inquired the other.

"No—thanks."

"Got anything at all?"

Ficks's renowned grin came to the surface. "Oh, not such rotten luck." Whereupon he turned and left the office, while the man at the desk watched the door close with a puzzled frown on his face.

The detective hastened. He visited all the principal downtown hotels. At the check room of one of them his search was rewarded. A display of his badge and an inquiry as to what was checked on No. 79 brought the check clerk back to show him a man's fur coat. It was rolled into a bundle, and upon opening it up an exclamation came from the detective's lips, for there was the big gray blanket he recognized as one from his own home.

"Put these back again and take care that you don't breathe a word to the man who will call for them."

The clerk nervously nodded, and the officer left.

"The blanket was gone," was the greeting from his wife when he returned home. "What do you suppose he's done with it?"

"There, there," he soothed, "you'll get it back. But tell me, quick, is he out now?"

"Yes."

"Gone how long?"

"About an hour."

"Well, I'll take a chance. I've got to look at his room again."

The detective hurried up the stairs. Ten minutes later the front door slammed shut, and the officer was just able to spring to his own room before Clipper came briskly down the hall.

The detective stepped out and met the artist.

"Howdy, Clipper; comin' down to supper to-night?"

"Soon as I wash up," replied the young man, looking sharply at his questioner.

"Say," said the detective, "I'd like to see some of your paintings after supper."

"You're welcome, I'm sure," was the reply, "but you know it's impossible to see color under these electric lights."

"Oh, well, I can see the drawing itself, and I'm keen for this sort of work. Gosh, I wish I could do it myself."

The detective was a strong man physically and no coward, but at the supper table that evening he felt the heavy oppression that rests on folks at a crisis in their lives.

So much depended on this evening. His own fortune, his wife's happiness, her very health, all depended on the outcome. Such great events that shape entire careers can occur in such an appallingly short space of time. A man can go down and under in ten minutes, five minutes—aye, five seconds—and his fall can carry with him the innocent ones and the ones he loves most.

He tried to appear jovial and at ease, and so far as he could see he succeeded but inwardly; he was in a torment of anxiety.

It was eight o'clock when he leaned over his wife as she sat reading in a chair and kissed her tenderly on the lips.

"I'm goin' up to have a bit of conversation on art with our friend." He jerked his head in the direction of the floor above.

"If you should hear any scuffling around, don't worry. I've got my little friend with me," and the detective patted something in the pocket of his coat.

She looked up into his face. "Is he your man?" she asked simply.

He looked down into her face and, frowning slightly, shrugged his shoulders.

A moment later he was seated in Clipper's room, smoking his big pipe and sitting near the easel which was covered with a drape.

"Well, old man, you're sure there with the goods as an artist." The detective was looking at a number of small canvases, unframed, which he held in his lap. With difficulty he repressed a smile as he barely made out the first part of an artist's signature which had been hurriedly covered with a bit of paint. And the part he could read did *not* spell "Clipper" or "Harry."

"When did you do these?" he asked.

"At school in Paris."

"Learn to talk the lingo?"

"Un peu," smiled the artist. "It was always hard for me; I never got very proficient."

"Got any others?"

"Oh, a few, but I'm afraid you are being bored."

"Not in the slightest; they are all intensely interesting to me."

The artist withdrew an album from the lower drawer of the bureau. "Here are a few pen-and-ink sketches I made on the other side."

"Clever," thought the detective, "the way he's got his dope all fixed up to play the part." He looked over the sketches, making little exclamations of delight as he inspected the different pictures.

"Remarkable, really. I had no idea our humble roof housed such a genius. And you will excuse me, but why—I am curious—did you ever choose to board and room here in the downtown district? I should think that you'd want more artistic surroundings."

"Well, you see," said the other, "I'm painting a night scene of the downtown section of the city. I hope to make it my best job, and of course you see this would be the best section of the city in which to live."

"Of course," said Ficks; then he leaned back in his chair and thought a minute. His attention was arrested by the draped easel.

"Is that the big job you speak of?"

"Yes," said the artist, then added hastily as Ficks arose from his chair and approached the covered canvas, "but it is only started—the ground work, so to speak."

"But can't I see what you've done so far?"

"Oh, well—of course, if it will please you, but really it's just a canvas of big daubs right now—heavy paint that I put on right out of the tubes without using a brush. That's the way I work."

The artist flipped aside the covering, then stepped back a pace, while Ficks surveyed the queer bunches of color, laid on so heavily that they noticeably stood out from the surface of the canvas.

"A man never knows what his career will be or where he will end," remarked the detective as he looked the artist full in the eyes.

The other moved nervously.

"But you know, Clipper, with the start you have it's not so hard to tell where you'll end."

"I had the best of instructors," said the artist, moistening his lips with the tip of his tongue.

"You must have had able ones at any rate. Did your masters teach you this way of laying on the paint?"

The detective reached toward the canvas, and in the flick of an eyelid picked off one of the pieces of paint. In its place glittered five immense diamonds.

Clipper sprang through the air towards the officer, but in one quick, deft movement Ficks caught the man in a grip from which there is no escape and had him pinioned to the floor. In another instant the steel cuffs were on the struggling man's wrists.

"Might as well go quietly, old boy; otherwise you never know when these crazy police revolvers are going to go off and hurt some one."

"You haven't got a thing," repeated the the man.

"No, nothing but highway robbery and murder; outside of that you're quite innocent."

"You haven't got a thing," repeated the other.

"Haven't I? Well, now, what do you think of that? I thought I had. When you gave my wife that twenty-dollar bill smelling of the peppermint candy the messenger carried in his pocket, I thought I had something, and when I found that check No. 79 which you had in your pocket was on a blanket wrapped in a fur-lined overcoat, I thought I had something else. And when I found that a man wearing a fur-lined coat and dreadfully hump-backed had bought a number of priceless gems in every large jewelry store in town I thought I had something more. And finally, when I find our own blanket missing and that it is the one you checked, and lastly, when the hump-backed gentleman paid for all of his jewels with twenty and fifty-dollar bills, I certainly did think I had something pretty darned conclusive. And then, too——"

"Oh, go to hell," hissed the prisoner. "You think too damned much!"

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ALL CROOKS ARE BRUTAL

SOME writers delight to picture crooks as lovable, adventurous characters who by their wit make laughing-stocks of policemen. These writers make crime attractive, and by suggestion keep creating new crooks. The crook in real life, regardless of his particular line of criminal endeavor, is anything but pleasing.

A crook is a lower animal who lives a parasitic life. He attacks you, like a mosquito, at night. He steals your chickens like a skunk. He takes advantage of your womenfolks like a savage, and he hides in dark places and prowls around at night like a rat.

Running down the scale of crooks we find at the bottom the cracksmen, who are known in the parlance of the underworld as the "yeggs."

They gave the name to themselves. The word yegg or yeggman originated among the gypsies and was used to describe a particularly clever crook in the band.

Of all crooks the yeggs are the most brutal, merciless, murderous and cruel. They have been known to commit murder without provocation. They have resorted to torture to locate treasure and have battled a whole countryside in a "get away," shooting men, women and children indiscriminately.

Yeggs are nomadic and migratory. They move in packs or "mobs" of from five to ten members under a leader or "highmobsman." Like all crooks, they drop their real name for a "moniker" or nickname. They take these names from a physical peculiarity, usually, and attach the name of the town in which they went "on the gun" or became a thief. A fat yegg from Omaha would become "Omaha Fatty," a thin man from Cincinnati become "Cincy Slim."—*Scientific American.*

The Mystery of Man and How to Solve It

By RUSSELL RAYMOND VOORHEES

PART VII—GRAPHOLOGY

GRAPHOLOGY, or the science of reading character by means of the handwriting, while not a new science is not as old as some of the other sciences that we have considered. It is what is called a deductive science, which means that, like the various other ologies that we have considered, it has been brought into being by observation and deductive reasoning. For that reason, and partly because it is not quite as old a science as Astrology and Palmistry, there may be some deductions with which the reader will not agree, but it must be remembered that Graphology is still more or less in the making and that what is believed to-day may be slightly altered to-morrow. However, it will be found, as the reader follows the subject, that practically everything can be proven by severe tests.

Whether Graphology is true or false is a question that must be answered by every reader for himself. The fact that the science has the following that it has would seem to argue in its favor. There is hardly a person who has not at some time or other read of the testimony of a handwriting expert in some court of justice. Handwriting experts are graphologists, although the newspapers do not use the term in their stories of the testimony. So it would seem that the courts have given at least a partial recommendation to the science.

But I believe we can go still farther than the courts have gone and feel sure that Graphology is fairly true. If it is true that a person betrays their character by their handshake, why cannot it be equally true that they betray their character through their handwriting, which is done by the same portion of the body? And why isn't it plausible to believe that a person who writes quickly and with no apparent effort possesses an equally quick mentality? And if these deductions are true, why cannot the same sort of logical reasoning and thinking be continued until a more or less complete delineator of character has been evolved?

With this meager attempt at proving the value and truth of Graphology I will dismiss the plausibility of the science and begin to discuss the science itself and show the reader how he can delineate character by means of handwriting.

In the first place, character is delineated by means of the size, the slope, the lines, the shape, thickness, spacing, connections, capitals, finals, punctuation, speed, flourishes and such characteristics of the handwriting. In order to properly judge what a person is a page or two of their handwriting is necessary. And it

should be natural handwriting done without any thought of character reading and also done in black ink on paper without lines. In other words, it should be just the sort of writing they generally do, and not the special writing that they seldom do. For that reason old letters and similar notes are very good medias for the judgment of character by means of the handwriting.

In considering the size of the writing the reader should remember that in a general way the size of the writing indicates that person's interest in detail. The large handwriting indicates a person who thinks in general terms, while a person with small handwriting, by which is meant low handwriting, thinks more in detail. And the smaller the handwriting the more attention that person pays to detail. When it is extremely small it indicates a power of concentration, which is in a way a high development of the power of considering detail. The person whose writing is small or low will have an analytical mind.

The relative height of letters indicates the relative conscientiousness of the person. Those who make their letters of the same height will be as conscientious in other things, while those who pay less regard to the height of their letters, making some high and some low, will be found to be less conscientious in other things.

Frequently it is found that words taper as they near their end, or vice versa. The former indicates finesse, while the latter denotes ingenuousness. When the words taper toward the end so much that they appear to end in a single stroke rather than in a letter, they indicate craftiness.

Sometimes the first letter of a word is always made larger than the following letters, regardless of whether the word is capitalized or not. This denotes tact.

A lack of imagination is shown when the letters like b, d, h, k, and t do not extend over twice the height of the small letters such as a, c, e and so on. When these letters are higher and when the capital letters tower over them all, then a vivid imagination is indicated.

The slope of the writing gives an insight into the affections of the person. Vertical writing indicates the lack of affection. When writing slopes to the right it denotes affections; the greater the slope the greater the degree of affection. And of course writing that slopes to the left or is considered backhand indicates a person void of affections, the greater the slope the greater being their cold-bloodedness. In reading character by means of the slope of the handwriting it must be borne in mind that schools are in some cases teaching vertical writing, although this crazy idea is fast being dropped. Every effort should be made to secure handwriting that is natural, and not the kind that some teacher insisted on having.

The lines of the writing mean the apparent base line. In order to properly judge whether a person possesses certain traits it is absolutely necessary that the writing be done on blank paper without the aid of ruler, guide or anything of a similar nature. The spirit of the person is indicated by the base line of the writing. If it is straight, as if the writing had been done on ruled paper, it denotes straightforwardness, while the irregular base line means a lack of this quality, but not necessarily dishonesty. When the writing rises as it reaches the right-hand side of the paper it denotes buoyancy, while a sloping down of the base line as it reaches the right-hand side of the paper indicates depression, which, however, is generally temporary and not a chronic melancholy.

The intellect of a person is indicated in the shape of the letters without regard to any particular letter. When the letters are compressed they indicate reserve and dignity. On the other hand, letters which are not compressed, but which are more open, indicate friendliness. The writing that appears angular or seems to be made up of more straight lines than curves means a person with a scientific mind and one who can easily master scientific facts.

Small letters that are pointed at the top indicate a person with a keen sense of perception, while well-rounded letters at the top indicate the reverse or lack of this. When the base of the small letters is pointed it indicates curiosity, while the small letters with rounded bases indicates the opposite of this or a lack of this quality.

The way a person crosses their t's means much. When they cross them with a bold stroke it denotes resistance, while acquiescent people omit them altogether. A fancy cross

with a curve on either end indicates a light mentality. When the cross strokes of a t ascend they indicate ambition, while a descending denotes a person void of ambition or one who is very much opinionated. When a person touches up their writing after apparently finishing it, it can be taken for granted that that person is desirous of improving themselves.

The thickness of the strokes gives an insight into the senses of the person. In considering thickness, we consider the uptroke, the down stroke and the cross stroke in writing, since these are all the strokes there are in any piece of writing. And by thickness in writing I mean the thickness of these various strokes, that is, whether they are light, heavy, shaded and so on.

When the down stroke in a writing is light and shows no change from the up stroke, it denotes a spirituality. When the down stroke is shaded it indicates a warmth of nature, and when the stroke is very heavy and out of all proportion to the rest of the strokes, it means sensuality.

When the cross stroke is not shaded or is light, it indicates an absence of sensuousness. And, of course, shaded cross strokes indicate the opposite of this.

Breadth of mind is denoted by the spacing of the writing. Spacing is divided into two parts, the spacing of the letters and words and the spacing of the lines. In a general way the more liberal the spacing the more liberal-minded the person is believed to be, and on the contrary the more cramped the spacing the more narrow-minded they are.

When the writing shows a tendency to be contracted and cramped into as little space as possible, it indicates a sense of economy, while the writing that takes up too much space shows a mind that is not economical.

In considering the spacing between the lines, writing that has a great deal of space between the lines denotes a person who is fond of luxury and luxurious surroundings, while writing the lines of which are closer together indicates a lack or absence of this desire. Even spacing of the lines indicates a keen sense of justice, while an irregular spacing indicates partiality in justice.

The connections between letters gives an insight into the logic of the person. When words are broken up into parts it indicates a keen sense of intuition, while writing that shows the letters in each word connected denotes a mind that works along logical lines. Lawyers frequently write in this way, since their whole life is often spent working out logical conclusions.

When the words are joined together several in a string it means stubbornness.

It is sometimes noticed that new ways are devised by people for connecting letters and words, and when this is found it indicates an ingenious mind and constructiveness.

The capital letters in a person's writing gives an insight into what that person thinks of himself. The very small capital letter, hardly any larger than the small letter, denotes servility. The average high capital letter indicates self-respect, while the letter that is higher than the average means egotism varying in degree as to the heighth of the letters.

The way a writer ends his words or, in other words his finals, indicates the state of his generosity. When the finals seem to have been extended to fill the space between the words or to the margin of the paper, it means a suspicious nature.

From a study of the way a person punctuates their writing we can get some idea as to the care with which they do other things. When writing shows an absence of punctuation it indicates negligence, while punctuation carelessly placed means a careless person. On the other hand, punctuation carefully placed denotes carefulness, and the writer who carefully draws a little dash for a period at the end of a sentence is a possessor of caution.

The liberal use of quotation-marks, underscoring and exclamation-marks indicates a romantic nature.

The speed with which a person writes gives us an insight into the amount of energy that they possess.

The slow writer is the indolent person, while the person who writes as if he were going to catch a train is the person bubbling over with energy.

And when the words and letters do not seem to be half formed it indicates an activity of mind that the hands find hard to keep up with.

The flourishes of a person's writing give an insight into their ostentatious nature. Modesty is denoted by the absence of flourishes, the quiet natural writing. On the other hand, the writing that is full of flourishes denotes a character that is equally as full of ostentation.

Frequently the signature of a person throws added light on that person's character. When it is different from the body of the writing it indicates an air of importance, while the flourished signature shows a desire for approbation. Once in a while a signature is found that is completely inclosed by a stroke of the pen. Such a peculiarity indicates impenetrability.

Now that we have considered the separate features of writing, it is possible to learn still more by considering the writing as a whole, just as we did with the face as a whole in the article on Physiognomy.

When a person writes the same always and at all times it denotes a person with a constant character and with an absence of so-called moods. They are just the same to-day as they were a week ago, and they will be just the same a week hence. On the other hand, when we find that the writing changes frequently, we find that the person is a person of moods. They write as they feel, and since they do not always feel the same, they do not always write the same.

These are some of the things that Graphology teaches us. There are, of course, many other things, such as the finer shading of character, but the reader will be able to test out the science from these few brief remarks and see whether it is as good as he anticipated or better or worse. It is surprising to find that handwriting indicates practically the same characteristics as does Astrology and the other sciences that have been considered in these articles. So it would seem that they are either all good or all bad.

Send us a one-cent stamp to cover postage, and we will mail you a copy of "Moving Picture Stories."

A GREAT BUFFALO RANCH STARTED

A BUFFALO herd of nearly a thousand animals will soon roam the hills and vales of Wenas range, Washington, with an area of 25,000 acres of wild grass land, lying between the Yakima and Columbia rivers. The nucleus of this buffalo ranch is fully one-half of the famous herd of the Scotty Philips estate near Fort Pierre, S. D. They were purchased by O. D. Gibson of Yakima, representing a Western meat company. The buffalo are to be delivered at once—twenty-five in each car of several special trains.

The history of the Scotty Philips buffalo farm dates back a quarter century, when he rounded up the remnant of a once wild herd and kept them confined by a high barbed-wire fence. As the herd increased he widened his confines, and when he died several years ago the animals numbered nearly 2,000, all fully developed specimens of the plains buffalo of fifty years ago.

The estate of Philips has been disposing of buffalo to parks, zoos and private companies. The big Wenas range at his command, Gibson hastened to get control of as many of the buffalo as he could, and purchased nearly a thousand at from $300 to $400 each.

It will be strictly a money-making project. Each year a certain number of the full-grown, fatted buffalo will be slaughtered for the meat markets.

Conservation of the buffalo, began years ago, has resulted in increased herds, for they have the capacity to forage for themselves and to thrive under climatic conditions that domestic cattle could not survive. There are areas of land in the Northwest unsuitable for agriculture now destined to profitably maintain buffalo without expense of feeding.

The conditions on the Wenas range are ideal for buffalo, grass being exceedingly heavy and winter snows light, if any. Numerous creeks and lakes dot the prairie to provide drink and "wallows" for the herd. Gibson will employ Yakima Indian youths to ride the hills and guard the buffalo.

Current News

CALF ENDURES PRIVATION

A calf buried under a haystack for sixteen days without water, not only alive when discovered, but able to get up and gambol away, is reported at Pierre, S. D., by H. C. Quackenbush on the Riggs and Quackenbush ranch.

Over half a month ago a haystack surrounded by a large number of cattle, mostly calves, tumbled over, burying several of the smaller animals.

The accident was discovered and the animals were all dug out shortly after, but the workmen overlooked one small calf, evidently, for hauling the hay for feed sixteen days later they uncovered the calf, which got up and scampered away when released from its prison.

PALATIAL BATH HOUSE FOR PET DOGS

No longer will those pampered pets of Parisian women—the Pomeranian and the Pekingese—be left to the unskilled care of the maid for their weekly baths.

Elaborate baths, constructed and equipped exclusively for the ablutions of dogs have just been opened in the exclusive St. Honore quarters.

The dog rides in a luxurious motor car to the baths, where he has a private bathing compartment.

After the bath experienced masseurs pay their respects to his canine highness, while a manicure shapes his aristocratic claws. When the veterinary determines that his health is all that his owner could desire, he re-enters the motor car with his mistress and returns home to a dainty meal of porterhouse steak.

PAUPER BURIED UNDER HIS $2,000 TOMBSTONE

Abel Bennington Crawford, who died in the Los Angeles County Hospital, aged 88, a ward of the county, was buried the other day in the shadow of a tombstone for which he paid $2,000 eleven years ago.

In 1911 Crawford purchased in Rosedale Cemetery, in Los Angeles, a lot valued at $135 and erected upon it an imposing granite monument fifteen feet high, with a marble base five feet square. He paid $10 to have a marble worker cut his name upon it. It is one of the most expensive monuments in the cemetery.

Next he had a steel vault embedded beside the monument in what was to be his grave. Then he drew up agreements with the cemetery officials and the undertaker, arranging for his burial.

On March 8 Crawford became ill and, with his money all gone, was taken to the county hospital. According to his wishes there was no funeral service. His body, in a coffin bought long ago, was lowered into the steel vault beside the granite pillar where he used to sit and dream.

DREAM SAVES WOMAN'S MONEY

Police search was made one night for two highwaymen who held up Mrs. Frank Halversen, of Minneapolis, Minn., and then knocked her senseless when they failed to find any valuables in her purse late at night. The hold-up was said to bear out a dream she had recently that she would be accosted by footpads.

On her way to her home, near the east end of the Franklin Avenue bridge, Mrs. Halversen became so frightened at recollections of her dream that she stepped into the Bridal Veil chicken shack and hid her money in her shoe. Then she continued on her way home.

A short distance from the residence she was stopped by two men. When they found her purse empty of valuables one of them struck her a blow over the head which knocked her senseless. She lay unconscious in the street forseveral minutes. When she recovered the men were gone.

WALRUS HUNTERS SAW AN OLD RUSSIAN SHIP

A historic Russian side-wheel steamer, the Polotofski, built seventy years ago, is the latest addition to the phantom fleet reported by Behring Sea Eskimos, as seen this winter in the vast area of ice that surrounds the Polar regions.

A gigantic movement of the ice field southward in January brought it nearest to Northern Alaska for many years and members of several tribes walrus hunting were startled one night to see the old steamer riding in the ice pack. An investigation disclosed the identity of the old-time ship. That night the ice pack moved beyond the horizon.

The Polotofski was caught in ice floes at St. Michael in December, 1915, and disappeared the following spring during a great storm. It was believed she had been ground to kindling and sunk. The ship was built in 1856, the hull and ribs of Alaska yellow cedar and spruce. Her boiler was of copper and copper nails and bolts were used on the framework. When finished she was placed in service to carry ice and coal to San Francisco during the golden period.

Many deserted ice-bound ships are seen year after year in the midst of the Polar seas floating hither and yon at the mercy of wind and tide.

BLOTTING PAPER SAVED LIBRARY

The late Dr. E. Morrison, correspondent of the London Times at Peking, had collected a splendid library of books relating to China, which he sold to the house of Mitsui in Japan. The Mitsuis, the Rothschilds of the Far East, were about to establish a seat of Oriental study and desired the Morrison books for this purpose. This much is known, but what happened to the library between the books leaving Dr. Morrison's house in Peking and their arrival at Tokio is not generally known and reads somewhat like a romance.

These priceless columes were packed by the Japanese agents of the purchaser in ordinary packing cases and made the journey safely through the Yellow Sea and were landed at the Japanese port of arrival. The cases were then put into the ordinary warehouses of the port. Then a strange thing happened.

The Japanese port was suddenly visited without warning by a tidal wave of unprecedented force and dimension. All the warehouses were flooded and the whole library was drenched in sea water. It seemed that the damage to the priceless collection of books must be irreparable.

The house of Mitsui, however, is resourceful; every scrap of blotting paper in Japan was secured and literally thousands of hands were set to work interleaving every damaged page with blotting paper. The entire approach to this particular port was blocked with wonderful books being dried—like Bombay ducks—in the sun.

The damage, of course, was heavy, but from the literary standpoint the library was saved.

HOT SAND BATHS FOR RHEUMATISM

From the earliest history of man baths of hot sand have been used to relieve bone and joint disease, especially gout and rheumatism. Faber and Plum, in a Danish medical journal, tabulate the findings during and after the sand bath in a number of cases as regards the pulse, respiration, temperature at different points of the body and the blood pressure, urine and changes in weight, as well as the effect on the pathologic condition. Their conclusions are to the effect that the hot sand bath seems to combine with the benefit from the heat—reducing pain and stimulating local circulation—a direct action on the muscles from the weight of the sand. This relaxes the muscle and tends to break up the vicious circle of pain and muscle contraction. This relaxing effect on the muscles from the sheer weight of the sand has been overlooked before, they think, but they regard it as an important factor in the effect, promoting resorption as well as combating the possibly unsuspected hypertonia in the muscles. Another advantage of sand baths is that they can be graduated with precision to fit conditions in the weakest. The only contraindications are febrile diseases, valvular defects, great instability of the circulation, and possibly anemia and asthenia.

SUES SPIRITUALIST FOR $500

Mrs. Anna Warwick, head of the Mayflower Spiritualistic Church, No. 168 Jamaica avenue, Brooklyn, went on trial recently before County Judge Humphrey on an indictment charging grand larceny in the second degree. The complainant is Lena Dunkey, matron of the Brooklyn Truant School, who alleges that she gave Mrs. Warwick $500 in order to make a man love her. She said Mrs. Warwick gave her a picture and told her to concentrate on it and look back of the man's neck. The "charm" failed to work.

Mrs. Warwick testified that there was no man mentioned in the transaction, that the $500 was simply a personal loan and she gave a note for the money.

The case will go to the jury.

JEWELS WORTH $1,000 RESCUED FROM SEWER

Diamonds worth $1,000 belonging to Mrs. Edward Van Riper were recovered the other day by the street cleaning force of Paterson, N. J., an hour after Eddie Van Riper dropped his mother's chamois jewelcase down a pipe in the bathroom. Mrs. Van Riper was so relieved when one of Paterson's veteran street cleaners emerged from a muddy manhole carrying the stained jewel case that she fainted.

When Mrs. Van Riper telephoned to her husand that Eddie, their 6-year-old son, had found the jewel case on the top of the refrigerator and playfully slipped it down the drainpipe, Mrs. Van Riper telephoned to Lawrence T. Ryan, Street Superintendent, who dispatched a crew in a fast automobile to the Van Riper home. A manhole was opened, a fine screen placed across the sewer and the main flushed with a fire hose.

UNEARTH RUINS OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATION

Remarkable discoveries of the ruins of an ancient and heretofore unknown civilization have just been made at Chalchihuites, State of Zacatecas, Mexico, according to information that has been received by the Government authorities.

While exploring the ruins that have long been known to exist at Chalchihuites, the discovery of a magnificent room or saloon 1,000 feet square was made by J. V. Kidder, Archaeologist of Andover, Mass., and Clarence Hay of the Museum of Natural History of the United States. In this saloon are twenty-eight beautifully carved columns of stone. Many prehistoric relics were found while excavating the ruins, it is stated. The statement is made on the authority of archaeologists who have visited the ancient city at Chalchihuites and inspected the ruins brought to light by the recent excavations, that they were the work of a civilization which had no connection with the prehistoric race that built the buildings and temples that are now in ruins in far Southeastern Mexico, nor are the ruins at Chalchihuites similar in any respect to those of San Juan Teotihuacan, where the Pyramids of the Moon and Sun are found. Neither do they bear any resemblance to the ruins at Casas Grandes in the northern part of the country.

Statement of the ownership, management, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of "MYSTERY MAGAZINE," published semi-monthly at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1922. State of New York, County of New York:—Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Luis Senarens, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the "MYSTERY MAGAZINE," and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication, for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor and business manager are: Publisher—Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d Street, New York City. Editor—Luis Senarens, 166 West 23d Street, New York City. Managing Editor—None. Business Manager —None.

2. That the owners are: Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d Street, New York City; Harry E. Wolff, 166 West 23d Street, New York City; M. N. Wolff, 166 West 23d Street, New York City; J. F. Desbecker, 166 West 23d Street, New York City; R. W. Desbecker, 166 West 23d Street, New York City; C. W. Hastings, 166 West 23d Street, New York City.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and condition under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona-fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest, direct or indirect, in the said stock, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

LUIS SENARENS, Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of March, 1922.—Seymour W. Steiner. (My Commission expires March 30, 1922.)

Mystery Magazine

The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. The following are the titles of the novelettes contained in the numbers already printed.

1 "The Eel Man," by Robert Carlton Brown.
2 "Zezana of Maison Rouge," by F. W. Doughty.
3 "The Mysterious Web," by Armstrong Perry.
4 "Under the Hypnotic Spell," by Dr. H. Enton.
5 "The Silken Sheath," by Crittenden Marriott.
6 "A Fortune Teller's Secret," by Gladys Hall.
7 "The Mystic Emblem," by Marie Coolidge Rask.
8 "The Cards of Fate," by William Goode.
9 "Mr. Bachellor's Apartments," by W. H. Osborne.
10 "The Inner Wheel," by Octavius Roy Cohen.
11 "The Voice of the Valley," by Robt. C. Brown.
12 "The Sign of the Seven Sharks," by Chas. F. Oursler.
13. "Under a Mask," by Crittenden Marriott.
14 "Case 4,411," by Gladys Hall.
15 "After a Million," by Police Captain Howard.
16 "Shadowing the Blue Triangle," by Chas. F. Oursler.
17 "The Case of Captain Fortesque," by Redfield Ingalls.
18 "The Bird-Headed Sphinx," by Edith S. Tupper.
19 "The Double Mystery," by Dr. Harry Enton.
20 "The Magician Detective," by C. F. Oursler.
21 "King Cobra Mystery," by George Gilbert.
22 "The Haunted Corridors," by Wm. H. Osborne.
23 "No Man's Man," by Maxwell Smith.
24 "The Trevor Puzzle," by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 "The Trail of Roses," by Edmund Condon.
26 "The Hindoo Vanishing Clue," by Pauline C. Bouve.
27 "Who Was Guilty?" by Beulah Poynter.
28 "The Evil Eye," by Chas. F. Oursler.
29. "The Thirteenth Door," by Edith Sessions Tupper.
30 "The Game of Detective Carew," by L. Jerome.
31 "Law-maker and Law-breaker," by Beulah Poynter.
32 "The Counterfeit Heiress," by Inspector J. Harrigan.
33 "Tracked to China," by Chief Roger O'Brien.
34 "After the German Spies," by May Halsey Miller.
35 "The Clue in the Box," by Alexander Douglas.
36 "Trained by a French Detective," by Rene Rennud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieutenant Robt. W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "The Sanctuary," by William Hamilton Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by C. F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign on the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
52 "The Phantom Motor," by Laura Reid Montgomery.
53 "The Blackjack," by William Hamilton Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by B. Poynter.
56 "The Secret of the Sealed Book," by Ethel Rosemon.
57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by William H. Osborne.
59 "Mystery of the Old-Time Club," by C. Bingold.
60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by Chas. F. Oursler.
64 "The Scheme of Solomon Snare," by W. H. Osborne.
65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
66 "The Clue of the Dark Room," by Hamilton Craigie.
67 "The Tongue of Osiris," by Marc Edmund Jones.
68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by Ethel Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
70 "The House Behind the Wall," by Julian Darrow.
71 "The Admiral's Spoons," by Wm. H. Osborne.
72 "The Canine Clue," by Thos. J. Lally.
73 "The Psychic Enemy," by Arthur Wm. Andreen.
74 "The Wonder Girl," by Ralph Cummins.
75 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
76 "The Spirit Witness," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
77 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
78 "The Stolen Year," by Edmund Elliot.
79 "The Affair at Hollywood House," by Wm. Kofoed.
80 "A Keyless Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie.
81 "Professor Satan," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
82 "Who Killed McNally?" by Beulah Poynter.
83 "The Clue of the Whorl," by Katherine Stagg.
84 "The 'Czar' and the Ring," by Edmund Elliot.
85 "A Clue of Flame," by Jack Bechdolt.
86 "The Face in the Crowd," by Marc Edmund Jones.
87 "The Man in Room No. 7," by Chas. F. Oursler.
88 "Four Ten-Dollar Bills," by Henry G. Howland.
89. "A Challenge to Power," by Dr. Harry Enton.
90 "The House Next-Door," by Police Captain Howard.
91 "The Trance Detective," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
92 "Friday at Twelve," by Katherine Stagg.
93 "By the Left Hand," by Hamilton Craigie.
94 "The Melody of Death," by Jack Becadolt.
95 "The Trick of the Great Yen How," by William Hamilton Osborne.
96 "At Moriarity's," by Fred S. Shuey.
97 "The Last Star of the Films," by Jack Bechdolt.
98 "Counterfeit Clues," by Chas. F. Oursler.
99 "The Cross," by W. S. Ingram.
100 "A Secret Service Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie and Elliot Balestier.
101 "A Crimson Price," by Elliott Lester.
102 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by Gottlieb Jacobs.
103 "A Museum Mystery," by Jack Bechdolt.
104 "The Little Red Book," by J. Alexander Young.
105 "A Man from Siam," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
106 "The Clue of the Emerald Ring," by Bulah Poynter.
107 "Hell's Hinges," by Hamilton Cragie.
108 "The Wolf," by Katherine Stagg.

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These statements may seem strange to some folks, who have all along been led to believe in the old "Uric Acid" humbug. It took Mr. Ashelman fifty years to find out this truth. He learned how to get rid of the true cause of his rheumatism, other disorders and recover his strength from "The Inner Mysteries," a remarkable book now being distributed free by an authority who devoted over twenty years to the scientific study of this particular trouble.

NOTE: If any reader of the "Mystery Magazine" wishes the book that reveals these facts regarding the true cause and cure of rheumatism, facts that were overlooked by doctors and scientists for centuries past, simply send a post card or letter to H. P. Clearwater, No. 1324-A Street, Hallowell, Maine, and it will be sent by return mail without any charge whatever. Cut out this notice lest you forget! If not a sufferer yourself hand this good news to some afflicted friend.

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FILIPINO SHELL USEFUL IN MANY OF THE ARTS

The placenta shell, found in abundance in the Southern Philippine Islands, offers a unique, practical and decorative resource in home adornment, says *Good Furniture Magazine.*

Being fairly flat and roughly circular, translucent and up to three inches in diameter and about one-sixteenth inch thick, the placenta shell serves the better class of Filipino house in place of glass. The strong tropical light is pleasingly modified as it passes through the shell-panes held together by wooden strips or lead bands.

Decoratively, the shell should find many uses. It is already being worked up by the Filipinos, under American direction, into lamp shade frames in most pleasing shapes.

It seems that it might find a limited application in furniture, as in cabinet door inserts or medallions in panels, in wood or metal screens where the vision but not the light is to be barred.

But the greatest use of this curiously beautiful shell would seem to lie in the domain of the lighting fixture and lamp industry, where effects can be effectively produced.

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BARBED WIRE FENCE PHONES IN SOUTH DAKOTA

There are still many rural homes that do not have telephones, and, as at present, economy in all lines is imperative, interest is reviving in the "barbed-wire system," which was more or less common in parts of the West 20 years ago.

In Carson County, S. D., the county agricultural agent has assisted farmers to install such a system at an average cost of material per farmer of less than $20. Carson County is 87 miles long and very sparsely settled, although the agricultural lands are fenced. Standard telephone lines appeared to be too expensive, yet there was a great need for facilitating communication. The county agent furnished information regarding the cost of installing the line, using porcelain nail knobs for insulation, which cost about $5 per mile. These knobs work satisfactorily when the barbed wire is tied to them with a short piece of wire.

In order to further reduce the cost some farmers tried pieces of rubber cut from inner tubes as insulators. Pieces of the tubing one and a half inches square were wound around the barbed wire and fastened to the post with staples.

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